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ABSTRACT

This report estimates the number of recent immigrant students that would enroll in Texas public schools as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and recommends educational strategies to address the unique needs of recent immigrants. Research approaches included a review of existing research on immigration trends and immigrant education, analysis of selected Texas school district data, and focus-group discussions with school administrators. An estimation procedure based on Census Bureau and Immigration and Naturalization Service data and related California studies suggests that the annual growth of the Mexican immigrant population in Texas will increase by 7.5-14 percent with the implementation of NAFTA. This translates into 75,000-150,000 additional persons under age 20 during the first 5 years. Other findings are concerned with: (1) school district procedures for identification of recent immigrant pupils; (2) student placement in appropriate specialized programs with timely transition to mainstream programs; (3) monitoring of student progress and support services during transition to the regular program; (4) coordinated comprehensive support services for immigrant students, including health and social services; and (5) orientation strategies for immigrant parents and support for parent participation. This report contains 34 references, suggestions for program planning and strategies, school district questionnaire, focus-group questions, and an outline of school characteristics and educational strategies related to success for recent immigrant students. (SV)

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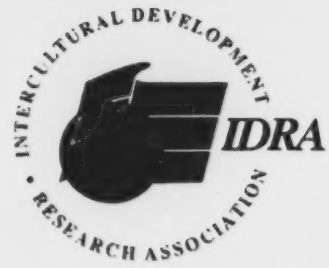

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April of 1993, The Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with the Intercultural Development Research Association to conduct a study of the projected impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on Texas public schools. The major purposes of the study included:

- Conducting a synthesis of the research on immigrant trends in Texas;
- Developing an estimate of the number of recent immigrant students that would enroll in Texas public schools as a result of the NAFTA agreement;
- Developing and pilot testing a methodology for counting recent immigrant students;
- Reviewing the literature on the needs/characteristics of the recent immigrant pupils;
- Developing recommendations for an educational plan responsive to the unique needs of recent immigrants; and
- Obtaining school administrators' feedback on proposed counting procedures and an immigrant educational plan.

IDRA reviewed existing research on immigration trends and immigrant education, collected and analyzed selected school district data, and conducted focus group discussions with a sample of school administrators. The major findings presented below were used to create a set of recommendations that address five major areas: student identification, student educational program placement, transition and follow-up, comprehensive support services, and family educational development. Each area is outlined below.

I. Student Identification

Findings

One of the key findings of the study was the observation that school districts' procedures for identifying and counting recent immigrant pupils varied extensively. While providing local flexibility, this non-standardized counting procedure made some local estimates unreliable and impeded the aggregation of such data on a regional or state-level basis.

Recommendations

It is recommended that school districts in Texas follow a standardized, uniform protocol for the identification of recent immigrant pupils enrolled in the state's public schools. IDRA also recommends that the state education agency take the initiative in the development of a standardized immigrant student definition and counting procedures to be integrated into the agency's Public Education Information Management System (PIEMS) reporting process. This identification process should include the standard definition for a recent immigrant pupil suggested in this report, as well as the recommended procedures for implementing the counting procedures that begin on page 17 of this report.

Identification of students will be academic, however, if the resources required to implement programs which respond to immigrant student needs are not made available. Therefore, IDRA further recommends that the standardized identification protocol be part of a process leading to the allocation of supplemental resources to assist school systems in meeting the needs of these students.

II. Educational Program Placement

Findings

The data suggest that, although recent immigrant students share many of the educational characteristics of native-born minority populations, they also arrive with a host of unique attributes that require specialized strategies to facilitate their transition into the regular all English curriculum.

Our research indicates that recent immigrants are often placed in distinctive educational programs which provided intensive specialized services designed to address their unique needs. Although such concentration may have some educational justification, extended placements in such settings may isolate recent immigrants from the regular programs and their non-immigrant peer populations, making eventual integration into such settings more difficult and traumatic. While short term placements of such students may be considered acceptable, the agency should also encourage school systems to provide opportunities for recent immigrants to interact with their non-immigrant peers and encourage school systems to monitor student progress and transition recent immigrant to mainstream programs as early as is deemed appropriate. A framework for guiding student placement and instructional services delivery begins on page 28.

Recommendations

IDRA recognizes that recent immigrant pupils possess unique educational attributes that may require specialized instructional interventions. Such placements should be particularly sensitive to such issues as students' proficiency in English and level of previous educational experience; at the same time, they should subscribe to the principle of the least restrictive educational environment as recommended for other special student populations served in Texas schools. Even short-term programs, however, should not be of a remedial or stigmatized nature.

III. Student Transition and Follow-up

Findings

School districts' efforts in monitoring immigrant student progress after transition into the regular program varies from little follow-up to comprehensive monitoring of student progress. Some immigrant students may weather the transition from special supportive environments to mainstream instructional settings without some type of support. The research indicates, however, that most require transitional support services, as well as monitoring of educational progress to determine when specialized assistance may be required during transitional stages.

Some key dimensions of effective transitional support are described on pages 38 and 43 of this report.

Recommendations

The state education agency should encourage local school districts to establish local monitoring and follow-up procedures to track the status of recent immigrant students transition into the regular programs. These procedures may include a variety of options but must include a requirement that the progress of such students be monitored for a minimum of two years.

IV. Comprehensive Support Services

Findings

Recent immigrants bring specialized needs that require coordinated, comprehensive support services. Many of these immigrant student needs are similar to those of native-born minority children and thus create a need for expanding existing services, such as language programs. Other needs, however, are unique to or more prevalent among immigrant students. These include: different, and in some cases limited, schooling experiences; traumatic experiences in their home countries or during immigration to their new homes; and limited access to health care in both their native country and in the local communities in which they now reside.

Recommendations

Services developed for and provided to recent immigrant populations should be comprehensive and coordinated. Support strategies should consider education-related needs of pupils (e.g., English language development, orientation to U.S. schooling norms, etc.), as well as health and other social services which may be more acutely needed but less accessible to immigrant students than to the native-born student population.

V. Family Educational Development

Findings

Educational needs extend beyond the student to include siblings and parents. New immigrant parents may themselves have limited educational experiences and may benefit from strategies designed to improve their English language proficiency or their basic literacy skills. Immigrant parents may also come from environments in which the parent-school relationship is significantly different from that operating in U.S. public schools. Many immigrant parents may be unfamiliar with American school assumptions relating to parental involvement.

Recommendations

Successful strategies for immigrant pupils must be comprehensive and consider the educational needs of the entire family. Parental involvement strategies need to consider immigrants' limited knowledge of the U.S. educational system and its assumptions relating to parental involvement, as well as the cultural and linguistic characteristics which immigrant families bring to the school. Specialized strategies designed to orient and support immigrant parents' participation in school activities, building on the strengths they bring to the educational process, must be developed and disseminated.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

In an attempt to bolster economic exchanges among the United States, Canada, and Mexico, the three major North American trading partners forged an agreement to facilitate trade among the member nations. The initiative, the North American Free Trade Agreement, has come to be known simply as "NAFTA." Although not yet approved by the United States Congress, trade policy observers and economic analysts have begun the process of attempting to gauge the effects of the trade agreement. Studies on the projected impact of NAFTA have tended to focus on economics and levels of trade among the major partners. As the debate on the positive and negative ramifications of the treaty has evolved, there has been an emerging recognition that NAFTA will affect more than the levels of trade among the member nations. Various groups have emerged during the policy debates advocating for recognition of NAFTA-related impacts. These have included organizations advocating for side-agreements focused on the labor-related effects of NAFTA, as well as others concerned with environmental effects potentially impacted by the expanded industrial activity projected to result from NAFTA.

Concerns about NAFTA-related effects have also surfaced from the border regions which will be most affected by the agreement. Concerns related to infrastructure needs (e.g., improvement/expansion of port of entry facilities, airports, environment, water and sewage services, health services, housing, and surface transportation systems) has led to the development of a $470 million "funding wish list" developed by the Border Trade Alliance composed of representatives from the border states. According to a study sponsored by the Southwest Voter Research Institute, forty-three percent (43%) of all United States' trade with Mexico originates in Texas, and well over two-thirds of all United States' trade with Mexico travels through the state of Texas.

Few policy studies have focused on NAFTA's potential impact on public education. In a symposium convened earlier this year (1993) in Phoenix, Arizona, by the Latino Educators' Committee on Free Trade and Education, various speakers alluded to the need for more recognition of the impact of NAFTA on United States public school systems, particularly in those areas directly adjacent to the United States-Mexican border. Recognizing the potential effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement on Texas education, the Texas Education Agency contracted with the Intercultural Development Research Association to conduct a study which would:

1. Synthesize the research on immigration trends in Texas;

2. Develop estimates on the numbers of students that might enroll in Texas schools as a result of the NAFTA agreement;

3. Develop and pilot a methodology for counting and reporting NAFTA-impacted student enrollment in Texas' public schools;

4. Conduct a review of the literature on the educational needs of recent immigrant students that have enrolled in the United States' schools in the past;

5. Develop an educational plan for meeting the needs of NAFTA-impacted immigrant students who will enroll in Texas schools; and

6. Convene a focus group of Texas educators to provide feedback and recommendations regarding the proposed definition of the NAFTA-impacted immigrant student, the proposed counting methodology and the proposed educational plan.

Immigrants can be categorized into three major groups: legal immigrants, refugees, and undocumented immigrants. Data on the numbers of legal immigrants and refugees are readily available. Estimates of the number of undocumented immigrants currently in the U.S. are significantly more difficult to develop. The United States Census Bureau estimates that the "flow of undocumented immigrants ranges from between 100,000 to 300,000 annually" (1991). According to a report developed by Haney (1987), the United States "has experienced historic levels of immigration during the past three decades, resulting in a foreign-born population which may exceed 15 million." According to Rolph (1992), reform of United States immigration policy has had a significant impact on the ethnic composition of immigrants. Whereas previous immigration tended to originate from Europe, "rule changes led to a marked decrease in the number of European immigrants and a commensurate increase in the number of Asian and Latino immigrants," a trend which has continued into the current decade.

The 1980 United States Census provides summary data related to the distribution of documented immigrants into the United States. According to these data, approximately seventy-one percent (71%) of all legally admitted immigrants tend to be concentrated in six major states. These high concentrations areas include California, which is home to twenty-eight percent (28%) of the legal immigrant population; New York, sixteen percent (16%); Texas, nine percent (9%); Florida, eight percent (8%); Illinois six percent (6%); and New Jersey; five percent (5%). According to a report of the National Coalition of Advocates For Students (NCAS), undocumented immigrants are even more concentrated, with fifty percent (50%) settling in California; eleven percent (11%) in New York; nine percent (9%) in Texas; seven percent (7%) in Illinois; four percent (4%) in Florida; and the remaining nineteen percent (19%) distributed across the remaining forty-five states. In his analysis of immigration policy conducted for the Rand Corporation, Rolph notes that "there is no reason to believe that immigrants will depart from current patterns of residential choice in the next decade. To the contrary, the evidence suggests that family and social ties are an important ingredient in location decisions. Therefore, newcomers...are likely to continue to settle in regions of current high concentrations further increasing the density of immigrants in these...areas."

In a study of the projected impact of the free trade agreement on Latino workers in California and South Texas, Ojeda and his colleagues (1992) estimate that between 50,000 to 100,000 new immigrants per year will migrate to the United States. The authors contend that while the trade agreement will expand job opportunities along the Mexican border, Mexico is experiencing "deep structural changes that are displacing hundreds of thousands of farmers...who are unlikely to be effectively absorbed by NAFTA-related industrial growth in Mexico."

Texas Immigration

As noted in the preceding discussions, because of Texas' proximity to Mexico, the state is significantly impacted by immigration. More recently, given the changing immigration trends, and the increasing numbers of Latino immigrants from Mexico and Central America, it has experienced a significant increase in the numbers of immigrants settling in the state's border areas and major metropolitan communities.

Research related to the North American Free Trade Agreement indicates that the Hispanic population is the group that will be most significantly impacted. According to data compiled by the National Education Association, Texas ranks second only to California in the numbers of Hispanic residents with 4.3 million persons of Hispanic origin (National Education Association- Focus On Hispanics, 1991).

According to the same report, Texas is only second to California in the extent of growth of the Hispanic population; from 1980 to 1990 the Texas Hispanic population increased by 1.3 million, a forty-five percent (45%) growth rate for the ten year period.

In a study of Texas demographics entitled *The Changing Face of Texas* the State Comptroller's Office

compiled summary statistics on the state population, with groupings by age ranges. According to the comptroller's summary, while Hispanics constitute approximately twenty-six percent (25.5%) of the total state population, the group accounts for thirty-four percent (34%) of the population between 0-4 years of age and thirty-three percent (33%) of Texas residents between the ages of 5-17.

NAFTA's Impact on Texas Immigration

Examining the distribution of immigrants across Texas

Determining the geographic distribution of the immigrants in Texas can be indirectly inferred from INS tables that document the intended Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) of residence of admitted aliens. Referencing these tables from 1990 to 1991 reveals consistencies in choice; however, the percentages of those choosing to reside in MSA's may be waning.

The distribution of immigrants residing in non-metropolitan statistical areas is more difficult to surmise, but the majority can be assumed to lie interspersed within the agricultural regions of South Texas. This region, from Bexar to Hidalgo County, supplies markets in north and east Texas and has been found to be a major zone of immigrant labor (Bean et al, *Opening*, 1989). Should Texas lose shares of this low wage industry to Mexico in the NAFTA's aftermath, Texans should expect greater migrant flows into the neighboring metropolitan areas.

In the first five years of NAFTA, inflows of immigrants would be expected to settle into the distributions outlined above; however, with the foreknowledge that Mexican agricultural workers may be the first line of labor to be adversely affected, Texas might expect an early upsurge in its southern agricultural flank.

Estimating the number of NAFTA-related immigrants

In developing an estimate of the NAFTA's impact on the in-migration of school-age children into Texas, the following questions are addressed:

1. Since NAFTA is an economic treaty, what effect will the agreement have on dislocated Mexican workers?

2. What proportion of these workers are likely to become part of the Texas labor force?

3. As these workers become Texas citizens, what household structure are they likely to bring with them?

4. What proportion of this household structure will most likely be of school-age or of potential school-age (less than 20 years old)?

5. What adjustments are required for the undocumented migrant population?

The following paragraphs detail the sources and methods used in addressing these questions.

1. In a 1992 California study commissioned by the Southwest Voter Research Institute on the possible economic effects of a NAFTA, researchers Raul Ojeda and Sherman Robinson used a computable general equilibrium model (CGE) to estimate the potential flow of dislocated workers from Mexico to the United States (Ojeda, Robinson and Wolf, 1992); they estimated a flow in the range of 50,000 to 100,000 new immigrants per year, primarily from agricultural

regions, during the initial five years of the agreement. The study concluded that Mexican industrial growth during this period would be unable to absorb the surplus labor.

2. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) tables extracted from their annual statistical volume show the proportions of Mexican immigrants that intend to reside in the state of Texas. For this analysis, the average from the years 1989 to 1991 is currently unpublished and was estimated at 19.2% (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1989-1992). This figure finds reasonable concurrence with that found among those of Mexican origin admitted into Texas under the amnesty program of Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). That figure was estimated at approximately 17.0% of the total number of Mexican admittances (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1992).

3. The U.S. Census Bureau produces an annual *Current Population Report* on the American Hispanic population. The 1991 issue estimates the mean number of persons per household of Mexican origin to be 3.84 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991). This figure finds concurrence with the average household size of 3.84 found among the same group of persons who were admitted through the Immigration Reform and Control Act (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1992).

   The question of what portion of this figure comprises school-age children was computed by taking the proportion of persons of Mexican origin under the age of twenty, which was found to be approximately forty-one percent (41.1%), and applying it to the average household size of 3.84. This produced an estimate of 1.57 persons which finds closure with that reported by Bean, Frisbie, Lowell and Telles, who found the same proportions in their analysis of the Mexican American population of 1980 (Bean, Schmandt and Weintraub, 1989). Unfortunately, the report concerning the immigrant population admitted under the IRCA did not include this analysis.

4. The California study appears to make the assumption that those Mexican workers displaced and "pushed" into migrating to the U.S. will become permanent American residents (Ojeda, Robinson and Wolf, 1992).

   Estimating the undocumented component is difficult, but will nevertheless be considered constant with or without NAFTA. That this component will remain constant, at least into the short-term, is an assumption derived from a special study on U.S. population projections produced by the Bureau of Census (1992). It was reported that despite the passage of IRCA and the associated amnesty program, the flow of illegal migrants into the U.S. has changed little. The California study supports this claim and cites a report by Bean, Edmonston and Prassel (1990) that estimates 100,000 per year; and that most probably a fair portion of this flow is comprised of family members (Ojeda, Robinson and Wolf, 1992). The assumption is therefore made that this trend will continue into the short-term and will thus be factored into the overall equation of this study. In maintaining agreement with paragraph 2, the Texas portion will be estimated at 19%.

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Steps in the Method Estimate

1. A simple linear equation based on constant change will be used to estimate the absolute annual rate of change. The formula for this is as follows:

$$b = \frac{(Pn - Po)}{n}$$

where: **b** is the estimated annual rate of change in absolute numbers;
Pn is the population at the end of period n; and
Po is the base population at the beginning of the period n where n is equal to the number of years in the period (Shryock, Siegel and Associates, 1976).

2. From a base population of 0, the value of **b** will be used to project the migratory population five years with and without NAFTA implementation (note that five years is chosen in order to keep in step with the projection period employed in the California study). Additionally, these projections will be determined using the California study range of migratory estimates of 50,000 representing the lower-end of the range; 75,000 at the mid-point; and 100,000 at the upper-end. Before use in the calculations, these figures will be adjusted according to the criteria previously discussed.

3. Annual rates of change expressed as percentages will then be computed and compared for each projection according to the following formula:

$$Pn = Po\,(1+r)^{**}\,n$$

where: **r** is equal to the annual rate of change expressed as a percent and where the remaining components are defined according to those of the formula in step 1 (Shryock, Siegel and Associates, 1976).

Changes in "r" will be interpreted as resulting from the implementation or non-implementation of NAFTA.

4. Finally, absolute numbers of migrant school-age children with and without adjustments for the additional in-migration induced by NAFTA will be estimated.

Results

1. Table 1 on the following page shows the data used in the computation of **b.**

b = (440880-100493)/2 = 170193.5

b = 170193.5 new immigrants per annum

2. Scenario I: 5 year projected in-migration excluding NAFTA

P1998 = P1993 + nb
set P1993 = 0
P1998 = 0 + 5(170, 193.5) = 850, 967.5

r1 = 49.5%

TABLE I

Pn	Year	Texas Immigrants Admitted from Mexico	Estimated Illegal Immigrants	Cumulative Totals
P0	1989	81, 493	19, 000	100, 493
P1	1990	130, 813	19, 000	250, 306
P2	1991	171,574	19, 000	440, 880

Source: *Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service,* 1991, 1990, 1989.

Scenario II: 5 year projected in-migration including the NAFTA surplus at 50,000 adjusted for Texas portion of 19.2% and household size of 3.8.

50, 000 * .192 0 = 9, 600
9, 600 * 5 = 48, 000
48, 000 * 3.8 = 182, 400

P1998 = 850, 967.5 + 182, 400 = 1, 033, 367.5

r2 = 57.0%

r2 - r1 = 7.47%

Scenario III: 5 year projected in-migration plus the NAFTA surplus at 75,000 adjusted for Texas portion of 19.2% and household size of 3.8.

75, 000 * 0.192 = 14, 400
14, 400 * 5 = 72, 000
72, 000 * 3.8 = 273, 600

P1998 = 850,967.5 + 273,600 = 1,124,567.5

r3 = 60.3%

r3 - r1 = 10.8%

Scenario IV: 5 year projected in-migration plus NAFTA surplus at 100,000 adjusted for Texas portion of 19.2% and household size of 3.8.

100,000 * 0.192 = 19,200
19, 200 * 5 = 96,000
96, 000 * 3.8 = 364,800

P1998 = 850, 967.5 + 364, 800 = 1, 215, 767.5

r4 = 63.5%

r4 - r1 = 14.0%

A summary of the results of these compilations appears in Table 2 at right. These data indicate that the numbers of immigrant students that may attend Texas schools as a result of NAFTA ranges from a low of 15,000 to a high of 30,000 pupils. The difference is based on the variations of the overall immigrant population estimate used in the proportion equation.

Table II

Estimated Immigration	Nafta-Related Increase
50,000	7.5% or 15,000
75,000	10.8% or 22,500
100,000	14.0% or 30,000

Expected Number of School-age Immigrants as a Result of NAFTA

The annual growth (r) of the Mexican immigrant population increases within the range of seven and one half to fourteen percent (7.5% to 14%) with the implementation of NAFTA. This translates into approximately **75,000 to 150,000** additional persons under twenty **at the end of the five year period**. With NAFTA, the annual growth rate for the immigrant population under twenty increases by the same rates. The significance of these figures depends upon the availability of those resources needed to meet the amplified demand (currently being prepared by the State of Texas) should the agreement become law.

While the overall annual increases average 15,000 in the low-end projection and 30,000 in the high-end projection, the research suggests that actual numbers will be well below these averages in the initial two years following the adoption of NAFTA and will escalate in the final years of the five-year projection. No data are currently available for projecting NAFTA effects after the initial five year phase; however, a tapering off of the initial enrollment impacts can be assumed as the border economies adjust to conditions associated with the adoption of the agreement. Research on immigration suggests that nine out of ten immigrants who enter the U.S. become either citizens or permanent residents.

Regardless of legal status the courts concluded in *Doe v. Plyler* that immigrant children are present in the U.S. and must be educated. In that landmark case the United States Supreme Court concluded that the denial of public education to undocumented immigrants could not be justified on the basis of school districts' economic expediency. If they are indeed residing in the United States and therefore must be educated, it is necessary to be develop a uniformly acceptable definition of immigrant students and proceed to a plan for effectively identifying and counting such students to provide local school systems the resources needed to address the challenges that these new populations represent.

DEFINING RECENT IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

Most NAFTA-related immigration impact studies conducted to date have focused on the development of estimates of the number of adult workers anticipated to migrate to the United States as a result of the NAFTA agreement. In the recent "NAFTA and Education Policy Symposium" convened by the Latino Educator's Committee On Free Trade and Public Policy, numerous participants alluded to the glaring oversight of the educational implications associated with the proposed NAFTA agreement. Among the group's recommendations was a call for a comprehensive study of the potential impact of the NAFTA agreement on educational programs on both sides of the United States - Mexican border and the provision of financial impact aid to state and local education agencies that would be responsible for integrating the expected influx into existing public school programs.

To guide the distribution of resources, however, some uniform process for identifying and counting recent immigrants within local school systems needs to be developed. As part of its contract to develop an assessment of the projected impact of the NAFTA agreement on Texas education, IDRA was charged with reviewing the research literature on this issue and creating recommendations on a definition which might be considered in developing both a numerical estimate and a process by which more accurate district level counts of recent immigrants could be obtained. In the remainder of this section, we examine the options available concluding with a recommendation for a specific definition for counting NAFTA- impacted students in Texas public elementary and secondary public schools.

Current State Practices For Defining Immigrant Students

As part of its research, IDRA conducted a review of materials summarizing the "immigrant student" definitions used in the various state education agencies in the United States. This review of state level definitions of the word "immigrant" reveals three main strands or groupings used for public educational policy:

A. **Definitions drawing upon legal (citizenship) criteria and status** - those admitted into the United States based on a system of preference established by immigration law - such as country of origin, family ties, job skills, refugees, undocumented aliens, analysis all carry different legal status - are all classified as immigrants;

B. **Definitions which define a common set of "immigrant" needs/characteristics shared by immigrant students** - these include limited-English-proficiency and the special needs attendant to such proficiency, and other issues such as a lack of familiarity with American culture and "systems;" and

C. **Definitions driven by economic or trade policies** - such as the *"Braceros"* of previous labor eras, or the "green card" workers and the undocumented migrant labor force of today.

In the area of education, most states have addressed immigrant students indirectly, defining the target constituency not on the basis of immigrant status, but rather on the basis of needs/characteristics attributed to the population, particularly focusing on the need for acquisition of English language skills. States with programs targeting immigrant students, as a whole, tended to define students on the basis of their need for bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) education, and attendant "social adjustment" related services such as specialized "transitional counseling" and related social and academic support services.

More recently a combination of citizenship and educational status has been used in tandem in the "immigrant" definition constructed for the *Emergency Immigration Impact Aid Act of 1984*. This federal legislation was developed in response to the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Doe v. Plyler*

legislation was developed in response to the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Doe v. Plyler* in which the court required United States public schools to allow tuition-free enrollment of children of undocumented immigrants. In the immigrant impact legislation, federal funding is provided to local school districts reporting enrollments of **recent** immigrant children. According to the Act, eligible "recent immigrant students" are defined as:

> ***[T]hose students not born in the United States, and who have been attending school in the United States for less than three academic years.***

The definition of immigrant students used for allocating Immigrant Impact Aid funding is the only uniform national-level indicator on the number of such children enrolled in United States schools. Discussions with selected local and state officials suggest, however, that even these data do not accurately reflect the **actual enrollments of immigrant children** found in local communities.

According to these sources, current federal funding is recognized by local systems as being a "sum certain" amount. This means that the United States Congress allocates a set amount of funding for the Immigrant Impact Aid without consideration of the numbers of pupils who may qualify for such funding. Increases in the number of immigrant children reported at the state and local district level do not result in additional dollars; states simply are allocated a smaller amount per pupil to allow them to remain at the present level of funding. The formula's failure to allocate additional revenue for increases in the immigrant student population reported thus provides *no incentives* for local districts to rigorously identify all recent immigrants enrolled in their public schools. (A review of immigrant student counts in selected school systems in Texas reinforces the notion that counts tend to be consistent across years, while counts for state programs which do yield additional revenue - such as bilingual education and state compensatory education - have shown considerable increases.) This tendency to under-report immigrant enrollments under Immigrant Impact Aid suggests the need for a separate definition which focuses more effectively on NAFTA-related impact, recognizing that the NAFTA-impacted immigrant students are/will be a specialized subset of pupils which will increase the immigrant pupil counts in the state. Whatever definition is selected then, must consider the effects NAFTA is likely to have on current immigrant enrollment patterns.

Recommended Identification Procedure

At the state level, it is apparent that the use of a need or educational characteristics-based model would be an inappropriate basis for developing estimated counts and fiscal impact statements. An analysis of the research on the educational needs of recent immigrant children suggests that other than their recent arrival status, these students are similar to many of the United States Hispanic/Latino minority students. Using proxy variables, such as the number of students identified as limited English proficient would fail to adequately distinguish the NAFTA immigrant from native United States citizens who happened to grow up in homes where a language other than English is spoken. This identification of immigrant student profile data would, however, be appropriate for development of **related costs** associated with NAFTA-impacted immigrant enrollment.

As the existing procedures for defining and reporting immigrant student enrollments are inadequate, IDRA recommends that the state consider the use of the following definition:

> ***A NAFTA-impacted immigrant student is any student between the ages of 4 and 21 years of age, who was not born in the United States, who has been enrolled in or attending schools in the United States for less than three years, and whose presence in the district can be directly attributed to the presence of those adults legally responsible for the student.***

A number of issues emerge in the development of the NAFTA-impacted student definition which reflect

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the complexity of the task at hand. As the question of NAFTA impact was considered, it was recognized that both immigrant and non-immigrant individuals would be impacted by the NAFTA agreement. Furthermore, in examining the literature on NAFTA-related impact, it became increasingly apparent that the proposed changes in trade policies would also impact economic opportunities on **both** sides of the Texas-Mexico border.

Expanded economic opportunities along the border areas are expected to attract not only international immigrants, but also in-migration into Texas of U.S. citizens from other states in the United States, and therefore some expanded pupil counts of United States citizen students enrolling in Texas public schools. Although a NAFTA-related impact, these influxes would not be incorporated into estimates of NAFTA-related "immigrant" student enrollment. Whether to include a secondary category addressing within country migration and its impact on Texas education is a policy issue which falls outside the parameters of this study.

Another difficult question in addressing NAFTA-related impact involved defining NAFTA-related economic activity. Would international trade related industries fostered by the NAFTA agreement be the primary basis for determining NAFTA-related impact, or would growth in other "non-NAFTA" related businesses (which provide services to these businesses and may employ recent immigrants and/or serve the population drawn to the border area) be incorporated into NAFTA-impacted estimates? The complexities of distinguishing direct and indirect NAFTA impact led us to propose a broad definition of NAFTA-related business activity that would incorporate all types (direct and indirect) of NAFTA-related enrollment growth.

A related but distinct issue involved consideration of employment status of parents of NAFTA-impacted children. Would children whose parents were laid off from NAFTA-related industries in the free trade zone still be considered NAFTA-impacted students? What of children of parents who had immigrated to the free trade zone but not found permanent employment? Would they be considered among the NAFTA-impact counts? As in other areas, IDRA recommends that the issue of current employment status be excluded from the procedures used to define NAFTA-impacted students, particularly since employment or unemployment of parents does not alter the presence of those children in Texas schools.

A third issue in developing NAFTA-related educational impacts involves the age range of persons to be considered as affecting local education systems. Would adult immigrants who may need basic English or ESL classes be incorporated into NAFTA-related educational impact estimates? While acknowledging the possible effects of NAFTA on adult education, we conclude that adult education effects are separate and distinct issues that should be addressed outside the proposed NAFTA-Impact Aid formulas.

A more difficult question in developing a NAFTA-impacted immigrant student definition involved distinctions between immigration created by pre-NAFTA economic initiatives, specifically the *maquiladora* industries, and post-NAFTA economic growth. Rather than attempt to distinguish non-*maquiladora* from *maquiladora* related immigration, we propose the use of a short term time frame in the definition (three years in the United States). While we recognize that some NAFTA-related migration may occur prior to the passage of the NAFTA agreement, the research suggests that the major influx will not take place until the passage of the measure and the actual expansion of economic activity facilitated by the free trade agreement along the border region.

Criteria to consider in identifying NAFTA-related immigrant students includes:

- Consideration of all students enrolling in Texas schools within the last three years;
- Students who were not enrolled in school in Texas/United States;
- Students enrolled in schools outside the United States; and
- Students' educational characteristics.

Eligibility/Need for Educational Services

The preceding discussion focused on the process used for the identification of NAFTA-impacted immigrant students, and a period of three years was recommended. This period of time is distinct from the length of time for which such students would require specialized educational services. Research on language acquisition has established (García, 1987) that most students require five or more years to develop academic language competency in English. The economic/health and social services characteristics of recent immigrants may require the provision of services over a similar, if not longer time span. Based on our experiences in developing programs for limited English proficient, economically disadvantaged, and minority students, we would recommend that students identified as **NAFTA-impacted immigrant pupils be provided necessary support services for up to six years after initial enrollment in Texas public schools and that funding formulas recognize the multi-year service needs inherent in effectively servicing this particular population.**

The recent public policy debates surrounding the North American Free Trade Agreement have included research on the number and characteristics of recent immigrants in the United States. For the most part, however, these studies focus on *adult* immigration patterns and characteristics, with little or no attention given to *school-age* immigrant individuals. One of the notable exceptions to this trend was a national study on the status of recent immigrant students in the United States, conducted in 1988 by the National Coalition of Advocates for Students. According to their study, "As immigrant populations expand in urban areas around the country, public schools are experiencing growing numbers of immigrant students, particularly in California, New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New Mexico and Pennsylvania."

After reviewing available studies on recent immigrants Walt Haney, a researcher working on the NCAS recent immigrant student project, developed a methodology for estimating the numbers of school-aged students residing in the United States. According to the NCAS, it is estimated that approximately 2.1 to 2.7 million school aged immigrants now reside in the United States (Alperstein, 1988). Pointing to the continuous influx of both documented and undocumented immigration, the authors note that these estimates may be considered conservative approximations, with the numbers increasing on an annual basis. Due to the relative youth of the immigrant population (the majority of legal immigrants are between the ages of 20 and 34) the Rand study on immigration observed that, this characteristic " taken in combination with the fertility rates of immigrants, implies that second generation immigrant children will constitute a larger share of the United States school age population than might be expected."

Texas School-Age Immigrant Counts

In Texas, estimates of the numbers of recent immigrant students are also difficult to develop. In the 1990-91 school year, Texas school districts reported a total of 36,533 students as meeting the recent immigrant definition used for the allocation of Immigrant Education Impact Aid (IEIA). By the 1991-92 school year, this figure had grown to 44,956, a net increase of twenty-five percent (25%) in a one year period. For Immigrant Education Impact Aid funding, recent immigrants are defined as students who were not born in the United States and who have been attending school in the United States for less than three years.

Problems associated with the IEIA counting methodology indicate that such numbers represent a significant under-count. No other estimates of immigrant student counts are compiled by Texas schools.

NAFTA Impact Pupil Counting Methods

The first part of the counting methodology review process involved a review of the literature to determine whether a similar or related immigrant student census procedure had already been developed and used in Texas or a similar state. Our review of the literature and discussions with representatives from neighboring states indicates that no state has a specific procedure for counting or estimating immigrant student counts. As stated previously, school systems do collect and submit counts of recent immigrant students as part of the reporting procedures for receipt of Education Immigrant Impact Aid provided by the federal government. Before recommending a new procedure, IDRA consulted with state and local district staff to assess the reliability and validity of those numbers and the current counting procedures.

Description of the Proposed NAFTA Student Impact Counting Methodology

IDRA developed and tested a multi-phase process for developing a counting methodology for the Texas border counties. The process included:

(1) Obtaining 1989-1990 to 1992-1993 immigrant enrollment figures from five border school districts to establish trends and future projections, (these enrollment figures are associated with immigrant student impact aid funding);

(2) Developing and piloting a recent immigrant counting methodology in five school districts; and

(3) Integrating a research-based projection of the impact of the NAFTA agreement on Texas immigration to further adjust the projected recent immigrant enrollment to reflect projected NAFTA impact.

Federal Immigrant Education Student Impact Aid Counts

Texas school districts are required to submit annual counts of the number of recent immigrant students who are enrolled in their school districts in order to be eligible for receipt of funding from the Federal Immigrant Impact Aid Program. Shortly after the United States Supreme Court ruled that the children of undocumented workers could not be denied tuition-free access to U.S. public schools, the U.S. Congress created the Immigrant Impact Aid Program. Recognizing that the decision would have some effect on local school operations, particularly in border communities, the Congress adopted legislation which would provide targeted federal impact aid funding to school systems with significant enrollments of recent immigrant students. State and local school district allocations of the funds were to be based on the number of recent immigrant students identified and reported by local school systems.

As part of the federal application process for receiving immigrant impact aid funds, the Texas Education Agency collects and summarizes school district data on the numbers of recent immigrant students who are enrolled in the district and who have been in the United States for fewer than three years. These immigrant impact aid numbers can serve as the base data for the development of adjusted NAFTA-impacted immigrant students estimates for the state of Texas. As currently compiled however, IDRA believes that the data will tend to understate the actual numbers of recent immigrants for reasons outlined below. Additionally, the recent immigrant numbers used in the immigrant impact aid formulas are based on pre-NAFTA levels of immigration. Since our research indicates that immigration will most likely increase as a result of the NAFTA agreement, it will be necessary to adjust such pre-NAFTA data to reflect the projected immigration influx expected during the initial stages of economic activity anticipated as a result of the free trade agreement.

Discussions with district staff suggest that existing counts of recent immigrant pupils need to be considered with caution. The number of reported recent immigrants enrolled in Texas school districts is, at best, a gross estimate. Because the Congress appropriates a sum certain amount of federal funding for the program, local school districts are not provided additional funding if they identify significantly larger numbers of recent immigrants in their districts. According to the research conducted on the impact aid program, if numbers increase during a reporting period, the amount of funding provided to individual states and school districts remains relatively constant, as the per pupil amounts are proportionately reduced in order for the program to stay within its appropriated amount. This lack of commensurate adjustments based on increasing counts in turn creates little incentive for school districts to improve their immigrant impact aid student counting procedures. Even with financial incentives for accurately identifying, counting and reporting immigrant student counts, some districts many choose not to go to the trouble of setting up unpopular programs for unpopular students.

Local District Counts of Recent Immigrant Enrollments

Five border schools districts were selected as pilot sites for this study: Brownsville Independent School District (ISD), McAllen ISD, Laredo-United ISD, Weslaco ISD, and Rio Grande City ISD. IDRA contacted the superintendents at each of these school districts and requested their assistance in obtaining district data on:

(a) Definition for "immigrant;"

(b) Student immigrant counting and reporting methods; and

(c) Student immigrant enrollment in school programs.

Appendix A includes a sample of the Records Review for New Enrollees form used for data collection.

IDRA conducted an on-site review of the data provided by each of the five school districts; information and sources were reviewed. IDRA also conducted an in-depth interview with the appropriate district personnel to find out how the data were obtained and what methods were used to identify, count, and report new immigrant enrollees. Appendix B includes a sample of the On-Site Validation Procedures and the interview schedule.

Once the data had been collected and processed, IDRA conducted a focus group with the superintendents or their designated representatives for the purpose of obtaining their input and perspectives on the implications of the findings, immigrant student needs and the education plan for meeting those needs. Appendix C includes a sample of the focus group questions.

Findings

Methods used to identify immigrant enrollees

The five districts who participated in the study used a variety of methods for identifying their new enrollees as "immigrants," including the Emergency Immigrant Education Act definition[1], a home language survey, birth certificates, and proof of residence. One district had a director of student services whose staff was specially trained to identify, count and report immigrant enrollees. Another district had an attendance officer who certified all new students as residents and who interviewed the parents of recent immigrant children (see Table III).

Methods used to count immigrant enrollees

Again, there was wide variance in the methods districts used to count their immigrant enrollees ranging from a home language survey, registration forms, campus rosters, and monthly immigrant reports (see Table IV).

Methods used to report immigrant enrollees

Four of the five districts reported sending the information to the Texas Education Agency through the PEIMS report. One district prepared monthly reports for the superintendent (see Table V).

[1] An eligible immigrant child is one who was not born in the United States and who has been attending schools in any one or more states for less than three complete academic years. This includes children: (1) who are not U.S. citizens; (2) reported as refugees under the Transition Program for Refugee children (TPRC); and (3) of lawful permanent resident aliens, refugees, parolees, persons of other immigrant status, and immigrant residents in the U.S. without proper documentation. This excludes children: (1) of foreign diplomats; (2) born abroad but whose parents are U.S. citizens; and (3) of foreign residents temporarily in the U.S. for business or pleasure. (EIEA P.L. 100-297, 34 CFR 581.)

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Table III

What methods does your district use to identify immigrant enrollees?

Method	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
Emergency Immigrant Ed. Act (EIEA) Definition				X	X
Home Language Survey				X	
Ask Family					X
Cumulative Record Folder documentation from non-U.S. Schools					X
Registration Form request for birth document	X				
Registration Form request for parent identification	X				
Birth certificates, documents	X		X		
Baptismal records			X		
Proof of residence			X		
Lawyers' papers			X		
All new students report to Director of Student Services			X		
All new students born outside the U.S. or who come from outside the U.S. register at the Attendance Office	X				
All persons new to the district must be certified as residents of the school district by the Attendance Officer. (To prove residency, phone and electric bills are reviewed and in-person verification is done at the residence.)		X			
Parents of recent immigrant children are interviewed by Attendance Office when they enroll their children.		X			

As data were collected for this study, research personnel also became aware of schools who incorrectly interpreted the definition of "immigrant." Students with appropriate documentation were coded as "non-immigrants" while students without documentation were being coded as "immigrants."

Number of students reported as new immigrant enrollees

The number of new immigrant enrollees varied from site to site. During the 1989-90 school year, the number of reported recent immigrant students ranged from a low of 305 to a high of 2,110. In 1990-91 the reported number of new immigrant students ranged from a low of 444 to a high of 2,425; in 1991-92 the reported number of new immigrant enrollees ranged from a low of 150 to a high of 2,288; and

Table IV

What methods does your district use to count immigrant enrollees?

Method	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
Home Language Survey				X	
Monthly Immigrant Report prepared by Bilingual Clerks at each campus				X	
Copy of the Registration form is kept at the Attendance Department	X				
Monthly reports prepared for the superintendent	X				
Registration Form coded at the time of registration	X				
Campuses identify immigrant enrollees using a tag on the computer					X
Records in the office of the Director of Student Services			X		
Campuses maintain individual rosters			X		
Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)		X			
Average Daily Attendance		X			

Table V

What methods does your district use to report immigrant enrollees?

Method	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
Information sent from individual campuses to PEIMS office			X	X	X
Information forwarded to Texas Education Agency through PEIMS		X	X	X	X
Information presented to public through presentations			X		
Monthly reports prepared for superintendent	X				
Attendance Officer reports information to central office annually		X			
Emergency Immigrant Education Act		X			

in 1992-93 the reported number of new immigrants ranged from 60 to a high of 2,262 (see Table VI).

Reported counts varied dramatically for one district (from 305 immigrant students in 1989-90 to sixty immigrant students in 1992-93). They attributed this drop to the fact that personnel were instructed in 1991-92 to be "non-aggressive" in soliciting information on status. This was due to litigious concerns surrounding the determination of the PEIMS immigrant status, refugee status, and legalized alien status. In 1992-93, this district had 12,014 students; 5,701 of whom were limited English proficient. Of the 1,344 new enrollees, it is unlikely that only sixty new enrollees were immigrants. It was reported that the estimate was closer to 450-550 immigrants.

There was little consistency among districts on the date that they reported their counts of new immigrant enrollees to the TEA. Three districts reported their counts during the same time period over a four-year period while the reporting dates for two districts varied from year-to-year. Across sites, new immigrant counts were reported at different time periods during the school year (see Table VII).

Number of students reported as receiving immigrant aid

Four of the five districts tracked whether students received immigrant impact aid. Immigrant aid counts and the number of new immigrant enrollees were identical for three of the four districts who tracked

Table VI

How many students did your district report as new immigrant?

School Year	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
1989-90	2,110	856	513	499	305
1990-91	2,425	839	444	572	574
1991-92	2,288	693	348	744	150
1992-93	2,262	784	582	992	60
Total	9,085	3,175	1,887	2,807	1,089

Table VII

When did your district report students as new immigrant enrollees during the following school years?

School Year	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
1989-90	06/15/90	12/89	End of School Term	04/26/90	04/27/90 (Spring)
1990-91	06/15/91	12/90	End of School Term	12/20/90	09/24/91 (Spring)
1991-92	06/15/92	12/91	End of School Term	05/07/92	01/28/92 (Fall)
1992-93	06/15/93	12/92	End of School Term	06/07/93	10/30/93 (Fall)

immigrant aid. One district's impact aid counts and its new immigrant enrollee counts were substantially different particularly during the 1990-91 and the 1991-92 school years (see Table VIII).

During interviews with district personnel, it was discovered that districts did not receive impact aid for students from year-to-year because they fail to track the students over a three-year period. This indicates that districts failed to receive funds for some students, funds which would help in providing educational services. A review of data files submitted by the districts also verified that students were not consistently counted as recent immigrants over a three-year period as designated by IEIA. After discovering the failure to track students longitudinally for receipt of impact aid, one district did submit a revised count.

Again, there was little consistency among districts on the date that they reported their counts of impact aid. Only one district reported their counts during the same time period over a four-year period (see Table IX).

Table VIII

How many students did your district report as receiving immigrant aid during the following school years?

School Year	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
1989-90	Data unavailable	859	513	499	Doesn't track immigrant aid
1990-91	881	839	700	572	Doesn't track
1991-92	891	693	1,028	744	Doesn't track
1992-93	1,740	784*	1,053	922	Doesn't track
Total	3,512	3,175	3,294	2,807	Doesn't track

* A corrected number of 1,406 was submitted to PIEMS.

Table IX

When did your district report students as receiving immigrant aid during the following school years?

School Year	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
1989-90	Data unavailable	12/89	End Of School Term	04/26/90	Doesn't track immigrant aid
1990-91	12/07/90	12/90	09/01/91	12/20/90	Doesn't track
1991-92	01/23/91	12/91	01/28/92	05/07/92	Doesn't track
1992-93	10/08/92	12/92	10/08/92	06/07/92	Doesn't track

In order to ground its educational planning recommendations in the realities confronted by recent immigrant pupils and their families, IDRA conducted a review of the literature profiling recent immigrant students.

Immigrants to the United States are as varied as their countries of origin. However, members of this widely diverse population share certain characteristics and needs that help to create a composite picture of the group as a whole. While future immigrants will be drawn to the border areas of the U.S. due to the employment opportunities associated with NAFTA, there is no reason to believe that the characteristics of these families will be significantly different from earlier waves of recent immigrants. In fact, according to the literature reviewed, there is nothing to indicate that NAFTA-impacted immigrant students will not be comparable to other recent arrivals in terms of educational and social characteristics.

The following section summarizes the current literature profiling the recent immigrant student population residing in the United States; it forms the basis for the proposed educational plan for responding to the unique needs of this population.

Language

Immigrants bring their languages with them when migrating to the United States. Some come with fluency and literacy in languages that have little relation to the English sentence structure, while other immigrants arrive with no literacy in any language.

Although children from Latin and Central America comprise most of the United States' immigrated student population, these children are not receiving adequate education. They are often disadvantaged by the linguistic differences between their homes and their schools. Some recent immigrant children are literally forced to learn two languages simultaneously; some must be able to communicate in their native tongue at home and master the English language in the classroom.

Learning a new language for some immigrant students, who have only minimal schooling in their native country is difficult: "They are sometimes illiterate, and cannot make the transition from Spanish to English, especially if they do not possess sufficient skills and knowledge in the Spanish language" (Noboa-Polanco, 1991). Some immigrated students have difficulty learning English because they do not have extensive skills in their own language and as a result, they are often placed in remedial courses that do not count as credit toward graduation: "Limited or disrupted schooling in the native land, a native language only recently evolving into written form, or a purely oral tradition are among the factors involved" (First, 1988). Some immigrant students, however, are well-educated in their native language and merely needed specialized support to transition those existing skills into an all English environment.

Most recent immigrant families cannot afford English lessons for their children before migrating to America; language proficiency is therefore developed in the native language. Even after arriving in the United States, many immigrant families continue to use the native tongue in conducting all familial communication. "Children of these immigrant families are strongly encouraged to maintain Spanish for the purpose of family unity, even if they have already learned English" (Delfado-Gaitan and Trueba, 1991). Immigrant children are often faced with the need to develop and maintain bilingual communication skills - in the native language for use in the home environment and in English to operate in the school context.

"Educators often assume that children's low achievement is explained by their lack of the English language communication etiquette expected in school," said H. Trueba (1990). If immigrant students

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do not participate in class they automatically may be viewed as lazy or uninterested in the material, when the non-participation may actually be the result of the school's failure to provide linguistically appropriate instruction.

Research on second language acquisition indicates that mastery of a second language requires five or more years. Premature exiting from language support programs has been shown to inhibit future successful integration into the all English curriculum of the American public schools. Most immigrant students need years to learn a new language. "They are often retained in-grade, inappropriately placed in special education, and are at a double risk for being placed in low academic tracks on the basis of language limitations or slow academic progress" (First, 1988). Thus, many of these students leave school at an early age.

Education Level

The extent of formal educational experience in the home country among immigrant populations ranges from extensive to a complete lack of any formal schooling; the distributional characteristics of the various groups' educational experience has yet to be determined. Current research does suggest, however, that immigrant students from certain geographic locations seem to out-perform students from other countries. For instance, Japanese and Korean students as a group have high academic achievements, while other immigrants struggle academically (Mellon Foundation, 1992).

Immigrant students bring a broad range of education backgrounds to the U.S. public school system (Garza, 1991). As a result, schools' assessment centers, too often unequipped for the task, find it difficult to place children in their appropriate grade level. Most schools immediately assume immigrant children are academic failures, requiring the students to repeat grades or assigning them to special education classes (Alperstein, 1988).

Attempts at judging an immigrant students' academic level are often misguided. If a child arrives from a country in which a language other than English is spoken, he or she is typically placed in a "reception class" for a period ranging from six months to two years; the student is then administered a standardized test in English to help guide placement into a regular school program. Predictably, immigrant students usually score low on such tests. Based on these scores, however, immigrant students are often assigned to classes that cannot or do not fulfill their academic needs. Once in class, the students are expected to progress through a full year of English-based curriculum every year; in turn, their inability to progress at "normal" rates labels them as failures (Cárdenas & Cárdenas, 1977).

Special education classes are often the final resting place of misassigned immigrant students. Though no statistics report the percentage of immigrant students placed in special education classes, credible evidence compiled in the NCAS study suggests that immigrant children are disproportionately assigned to these classes in many parts of the country. Rather than seeking the number of misplaced students, most studies simply mention different innovative programs that are available for children with unique linguistic and academic needs.

Immigrant parents often arrive in this country with little or no formal schooling. After interviewing immigrant parents, NCAS concluded that forty percent (40%) had completed 5 years of elementary school or less, while less than thirty percent (30%) had completed high school or had obtained any secondary education. Although immigrant parents face language obstacles, they tend to possess a positive attitude about assisting their children with homework. Approximately fifty percent (50%) of those interviewed by NCAS indicated that they continue to assist their children with homework. Less than twenty percent (20%) could not help their children.

Health

Many immigrants suffer from the lack of adequate health care. They do not receive the same health care benefits enjoyed by pupils born in the United States. Since state and federal medical coverage is not available for them, many immigrants have limited access to the expensive U.S. health care system As a result, immigrants are subject to spend more money on health care than is available to non-immigrants who can afford health insurance. With the help of "newcomer programs," health services are being provided to a small percentage of immigrant and refugee families (Friendlander, 1991). Immigrant students may have access to medical personnel, often part-time nurses, and on-site immunization; obstetric-gynecological and substance abuse services may also be available. Such programs usually offer referral services to connect students and their families with outside medical services.

Language, health, age and years of schooling are distinctive characteristics that point to the often urgent needs of recently arrived immigrant students. Public schools across the United States are now struggling to provide adequate solutions to these educational problems. The following section details four recommended program approaches to meeting the needs of this special population. Although not an exhaustive categorization of such programs, these are designed to meet the most pressing needs of immigrant students. Additional strategies which form success among non-traditional students is located in Appendix D.

Language Response Programs

Various programs exist in the United States for those who have a strong incentive to learn English and who also want to preserve their first language and culture.

English as a Second Language (ESL) borrows a lot of its techniques from teaching foreign languages to adults. Two major drawbacks exist with the ESL program. First, it does little to assist students with attaining access to a comprehensible curriculum. Second, it is not especially appropriate for young children illiterate in their native languages since it is specifically geared for use with adult learners (LaFontaine, 1987).

In research on strategies for effectively schooling economically disadvantaged limited-English-proficient students, IDRA concludes that to "provide effective and appropriate Bilingual and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction for economically disadvantaged at-risk students whose primary language is not English" a more effective mechanism like "English Plus" is better than ESL. "English Plus" shows respect for a students' primary language and culture because it uses teachers who speak the students' native languages. This program also utilizes peer and adult tutors as role models to bolster students' self-confidence (1989).

Physical and Mental Health Services

According to NCAS, the school can serve as an important coordinator of services to assist with the health problems faced by many immigrant students.

Health preventive education programs in school can aid the immigrant students with protecting themselves from deadly disease, alcohol abuse and to learn about nutrition and family life education. Expanding school health care programs headed by bilingual school nurses who work with immigrant families can see that the children receive the medical care they need and provide health education to immigrant parents.

Counseling and psychological services should be provided to immigrant students who are having specific areas of difficulty, such as language problems, separation from families and making the transition from a rural to an urban setting. Counselors should be properly trained to interact with immigrant students who have undergone traumatic events: schools should "provide counselors with training designed to familiarize them with the cultures of their students and bilingual counselor aides to provide personal support and information to immigrant students are needed" (Noboa-Polanco, 1991.)

Parental Involvement Programs

According to Rodriguez and Urrutia, 114 out of 133 Central American children had personally experienced traumatic events in their home country or during their journey to the United States or knew someone who had experienced such an event (1990). Some of these Central American children have

also shot or killed someone themselves. Being wounded, threatened, raped, kidnapped, or tortured are common traumatic events for Central American immigrants. "Other children from Central America reported having suffered starvation, homelessness or being forcibly recruited into a combat group" (Noboa-Polanco, 1991).

Many immigrant and refugee students, like Central Americans, in United States classrooms carry with them unseen scars of personal traumas (Ramirez, 1982). It is because of these personal conditions that school programs should be provided: "Counseling and other mental health services are needed to help heal their wounds, resolve their learning and behavioral problems and ease their transition into United States' culture" (First, 1988).

Family Support Services

Some school districts have not only provided support services to the immigrant student but also to the immigrants' family. In New Jersey, for example, schools provide families with a wide range of referrals to community services such as youth counseling, job placement and a program in parenting skills (Mellon Foundation, 1992). According to Friendlander, newcomer programs should be implemented to provide a nurturing and supportive educational environment (1991). A newcomer program includes access to numerous services such as tutoring, parent workshops, interpreters and health services. This is very important because recently arrived immigrant families do not know about the public benefits or community services to which they are entitled.

Program Goals

The major goal of an educational program for recent immigrants is to prepare these children with the necessary English language skills, to develop a strong academic foundation, and to provide the opportunity to adapt to this country's educational system so that they can successfully transition into the regular educational program within a certain period of time.

Negative Current Practices Affecting the Quality of Instruction Provided

- Inadequate student preparation to cope with the new environment and to meaningfully participate in the regular program instruction.
- Inappropriate training of school personnel on effective instructional techniques and materials for students with special needs.
- Lack of orientation programs that facilitate student adaptability to this society and to the requirements and approaches of this country's educational system.
- Insensitivity of school personnel to the needs associated with newcomers with different cultural and linguistic orientations.
- Failure to incorporate the challenge of educating these student populations in the campus and districts' vision and planning.

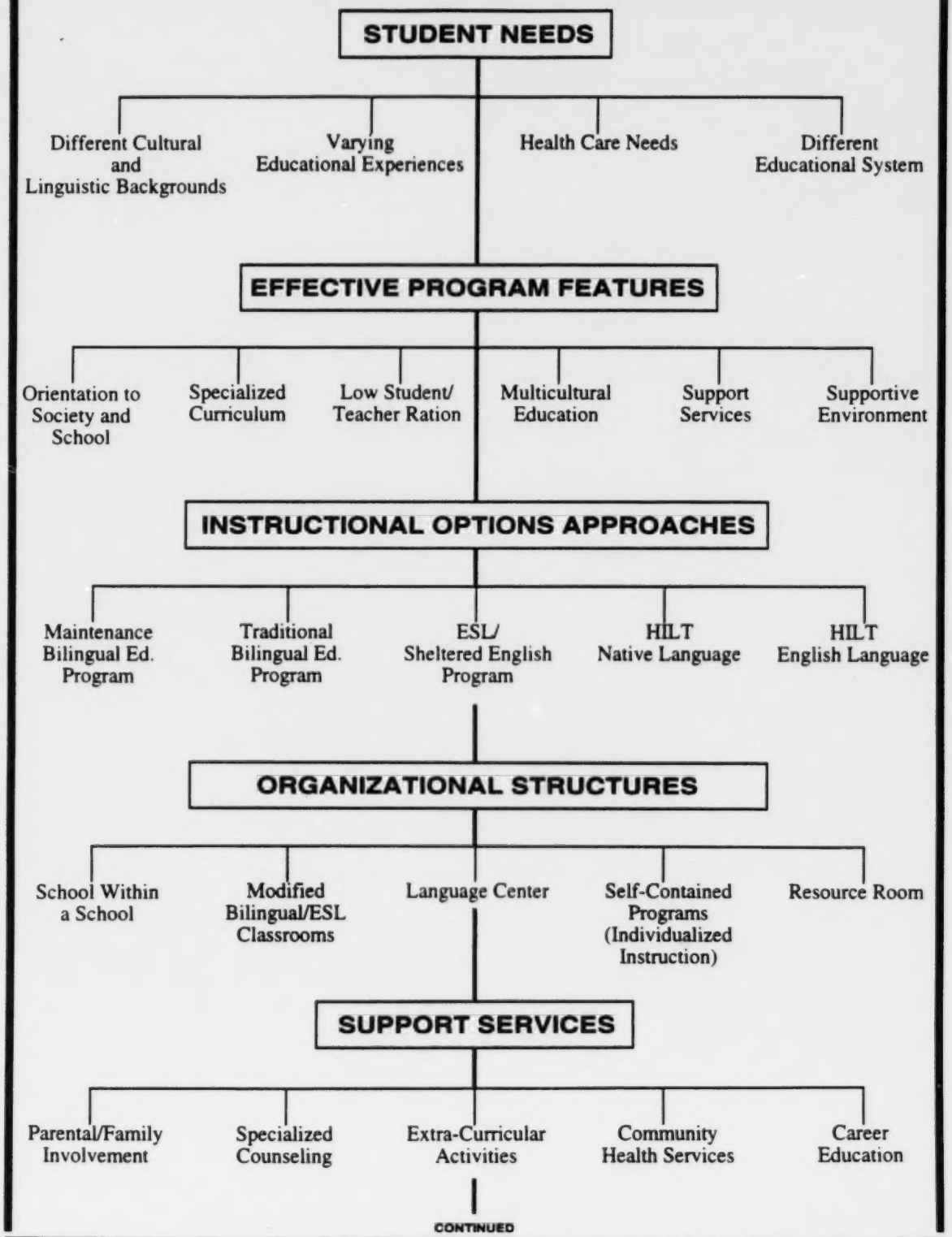
Positive Philosophical Principles Guiding Effective Instruction For Recent Immigrants

- Immigrant students are ready to learn, have high expectations, and can adapt to this society and to educational requirements and approaches.
- Immigrant students have specific educational needs which must be met prior to their meaningful participation in the regular classroom.
- Immigrant students represent a variety of cultural and linguistic orientations and the school must establish an environment that promotes respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Immigrant students require a support system beyond an effective classroom that ensures a smooth transition and integration into this society, particularly in transitioning to the regular program.
- Parents of immigrant students need to become familiar with the educational system and the role they are expected to play.

Figure I outlines major issues that need to be considered in providing appropriate services to recent immigrant populations. Programs designed to address the needs of immigrant pupils must be grounded in sound educational theory and comprehensive in scope. The following provides an outline of the key components of such a plan with accompanying narrative description of the key features of those components. It must include procedures for identification and needs of the recent immigrant pupil populations, and incorporate effective program features responsive to those needs. The immigrant

Figure 1

An Educational Plan for Recent Immigrant Students



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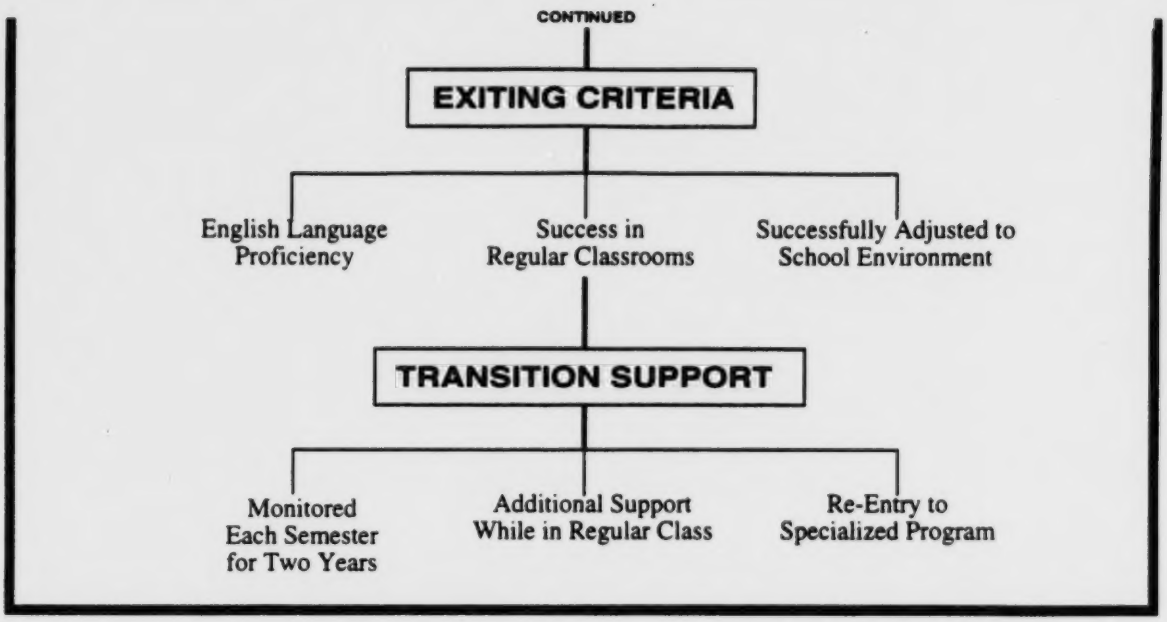

student education plan must include a range of instructional options sensitive to the range of language proficiencies present in the immigrant population. It must also consider the organizational structure options available/needed to most effectively deliver educational services to the recent immigrant. A comprehensive plan will also consider non-instructional support service needs, and incorporate provisions for exiting and transition students from special programs to regular mainstream classwork. Placements should recognize the lack of immigrants families' experience with U.S. public school procedures. The process must also be attuned to the specialized needs.

Identification and Placement Procedures

The identification and placement process provides data on immigrant students that can help schools answer two crucial questions:

1. Do these students need a special program before fully mainstreaming into the regular program?

2. If so, what are these students' characteristics and educational needs that will be considered in defining an effective program of instruction?

The criteria/procedure for identifying immigrant students who need a special program to facilitate their mainstreaming into the regular program include the following:

- Student does not have an adequate command of the English language to meaningfully participate in the regular program as measured by an oral English language proficiency and a standardized English reading and writing assessment instrument.
- School has difficulty in matching age with appropriate grade level (e.g., a twelve year old student reading at the second grade level in English).
- A placement and exiting committee composed of a parent, a bilingual teacher, a principal and a

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bilingual education coordinator or supervisor will review the data and make the following decisions:

- Are existing student data valid and reliable? If not, what information is needed to accurately determine student and status?
- What type of program will best meet the needs of the student?
- Who will have responsibility to monitor, periodically, the student's progress?
- When will placement and exiting committee review the performance of the student?

Suggested Identification/Assessment Procedures

Pre K-3

- Survey/interview parents of students in their native language to establish students' educational history and adjustment needs associated with the new school environment.
- Administer an oral English language proficiency test. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has approved a list of instruments that may be used.
- Administer an oral native language proficiency test. See TEA's approved list of instruments in the Spanish language. Students with a home language other than English or Spanish will not be required a native language proficiency test.
- Evaluate school transcripts if available.

Grades 4 - 6

- Survey/interview parents of students in their native language to establish students' educational history and adjustment problems associated with the new school environment.
- Administer an oral English language proficiency test. The Texas Education Agency has approved a list of instruments that may be used.
- Administer an oral native language proficiency test. See TEA's approved list of instruments in the Spanish language.
- Use the data gathered through the identification process are used for two purposes: (1) determine whether student requires instructional mediation in order to succeed in the new environment, and (2) identify the elements of a successful instructional program for the newcomer student at the different grade levels. Students' ages and conceptional development at states impact on the program option and second language methodologies to be used. Consequently, most programs use the K-3, 4-6, 7-12 grade categorizations to define the identification criteria and procedure.
- Do not require students with a home language other than English or Spanish to take a native language proficiency test.
- Evaluate student's school transcripts.

- Administer a mathematics placement, proficiency instrument should yield data on students' literacy levels in the native and English languages.

Grades 7 - 12

- Survey/interview students in their native language to establish students' educational history and adjustment problems associated with the new school environment.
- Administer an oral English language proficiency test. The Texas Education Agency has approved a list of instruments that may be used.
- Administer an oral native language proficiency test. See TEA's approved list of instruments in the Spanish language. Students with a home language other than English or Spanish will not be required a native language proficiency test.
- Evaluate student's school transcripts.
- Administer a mathematics placement test when students do not have previous school's transcripts.

Program Options

Friendlander (1991) describes the key features of newcomer programs that have been successful with recent immigrant students. These key features include:

- Orientation to society and school;
- A specialized curriculum that emphasizes the rapid development of the English language and academic content instruction;
- Low student/teacher ratio that results in more individualized attention;
- Wide range support services that more comprehensively address other student needs which affect student achievement;
- Comprehensive staff development program which prepare teachers and other school personnel on how to better address the needs of the recent immigrant student;
- Multicultural education that places a high priority on valuing and respecting cultural and linguistic diversity;
- Equitable access to resources prepared to meet the needs of these students e.g. bilingual teachers and counselors;
- Supportive environment that shelters and supports students to cope with the new environment that at times may be hostile and entirely foreign to the recent immigrant;
- Family atmosphere that makes recent immigrants feel the support to cope with new environment;
- Continuity during adjustment period that allows students the time to adjust to the new environment with the least number of interruptions.

Furthermore, the power of instructional technology cannot be underestimated in an instructional program for recent immigrants. Technology can support the teaching in very unique ways. For example, technology has been used very effectively in the management and delivery of instruction.

Instructional Options/Approaches

Instructional options/approaches differ in the amount of native language instruction, English language instruction, academic content and orientation materials that is covered in the proposed curriculum. Each option has strong orientation and multicultural components that stresses the respect and valuing of other cultures and languages. These instructional options/approaches use student-centered or initiated learning experiences such as cooperative learning, whole language instruction, literature based instruction or a combination of experiences that use music and imagery. Following is a brief description of the instructional options that have been most successfully used in newcomer programs:

Maintenance Bilingual Education Programs use the native language and English for instructional purposes. The major objective is to develop full literacy in both English and the native language in a content areas.

Transitional Bilingual Education Programs use the native language and English for instructional purposes. The major objective is to eventually transition to the regular program. The use of the native language diminishes as the student gains proficiency in the English language. Content area instruction begins in the native language and English as the language of instruction is phase in as the student gains proficiency the English language. In phasing the use of English for content area instruction, sheltered English or other ESL techniques are used extensively in developing content area concepts and skills. Orientation to school and society in this country are given special emphasis. For students who have a strong foundation in the native language, an accelerated form of bilingual instruction is provided.

ESL (State Program) uses special language acquisition and learning techniques that are adjusted to the students language production levels. For example, students in the preproduction levels are not expected to start using the new language until they have experienced what is called as the "silent period" in which they are listening and analyzing the language and are not pressured to prematurely produce the language. The state ESL program provides instruction for three language proficiency levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced.

HILT (English) is an intensive language development program where students spend a major part of the day (up to three hours daily) experiencing language acquisition and learning activities. The major objective of the lessons is English language development. Content area instruction basically emphasizes the need for vocabulary building. This instructional option is usually accompanied by a strong orientation program to help students adjust to the society and school requirements in this country.

HILT (Native language) is an intensive language development program for students who have limited or no formal education in their native language. This approach conforms to what research shows as a prerequisite to effective and efficient English language acquisition: a strong foundation on the native language increases the efficient acquisition of the second language. The program may last from three to twelve months depending on the age and experience in the first language. Content area themes and topics constitute the core of the HILT program.

The two critical variables considered in determining the instructional option that best meets the needs of individual students are: (1) student's previous educational history; and (2) student's oral language proficiency in English. The following Figures II, III, and IV provide the student categories and suggested curriculum components which must be addressed by the instructional program.

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Figure II

GRADES Pre K - 3

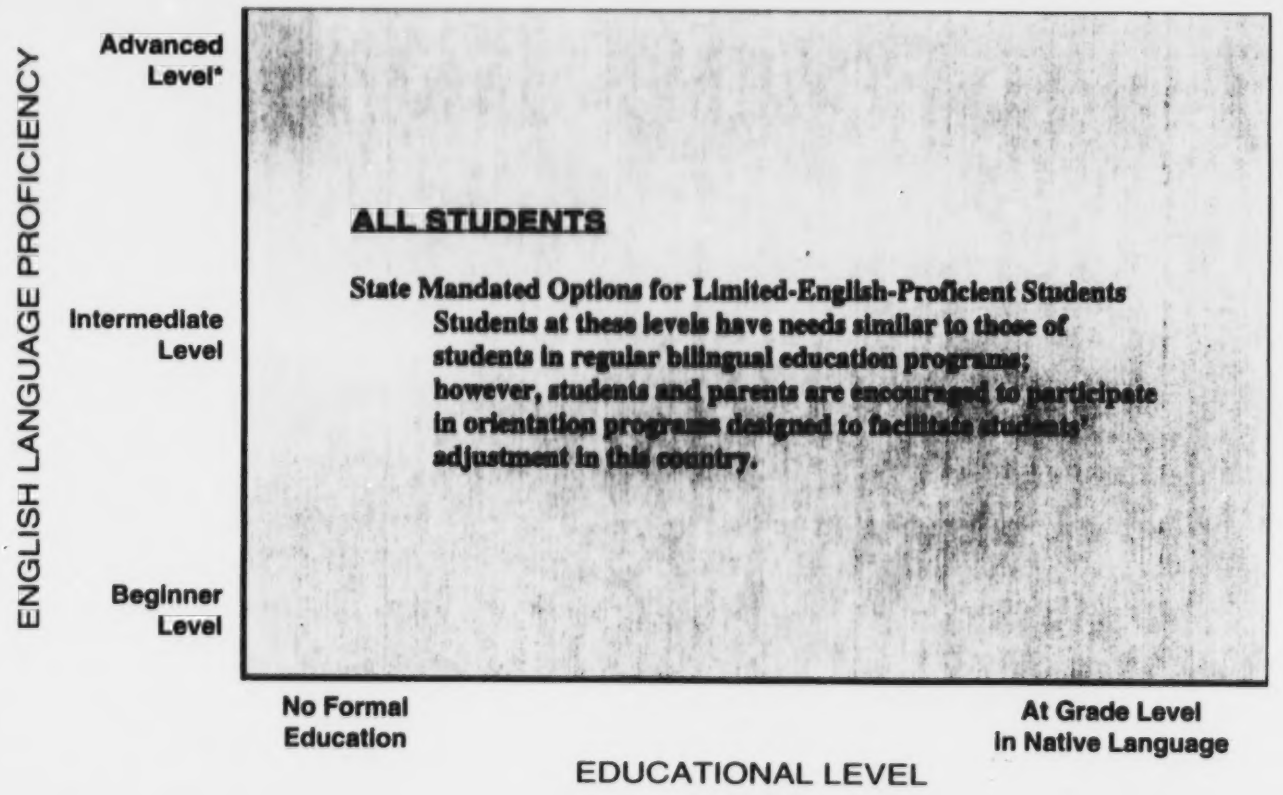
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
Advanced Level*
Intermediate Level
Beginner Level
ALL STUDENTS
State Mandated Options for Limited-English-Proficient Students
Students at these levels have needs similar to those of students in regular bilingual education programs; however, students and parents are encouraged to participate in orientation programs designed to facilitate students' adjustment in this country.
No Formal Education
At Grade Level in Native Language
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
*Native-Like Fluency

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Figure III

GRADES 4 - 6

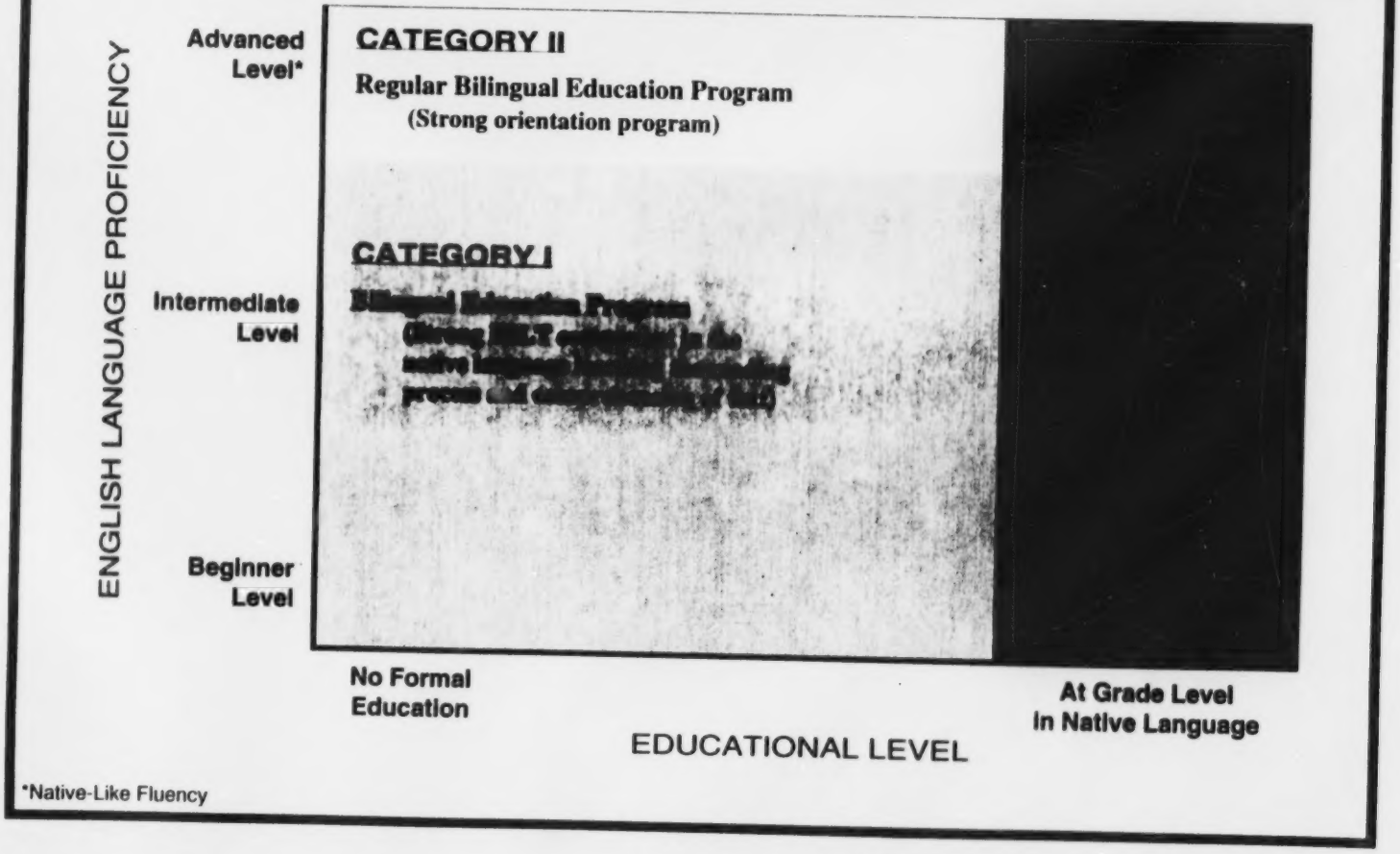

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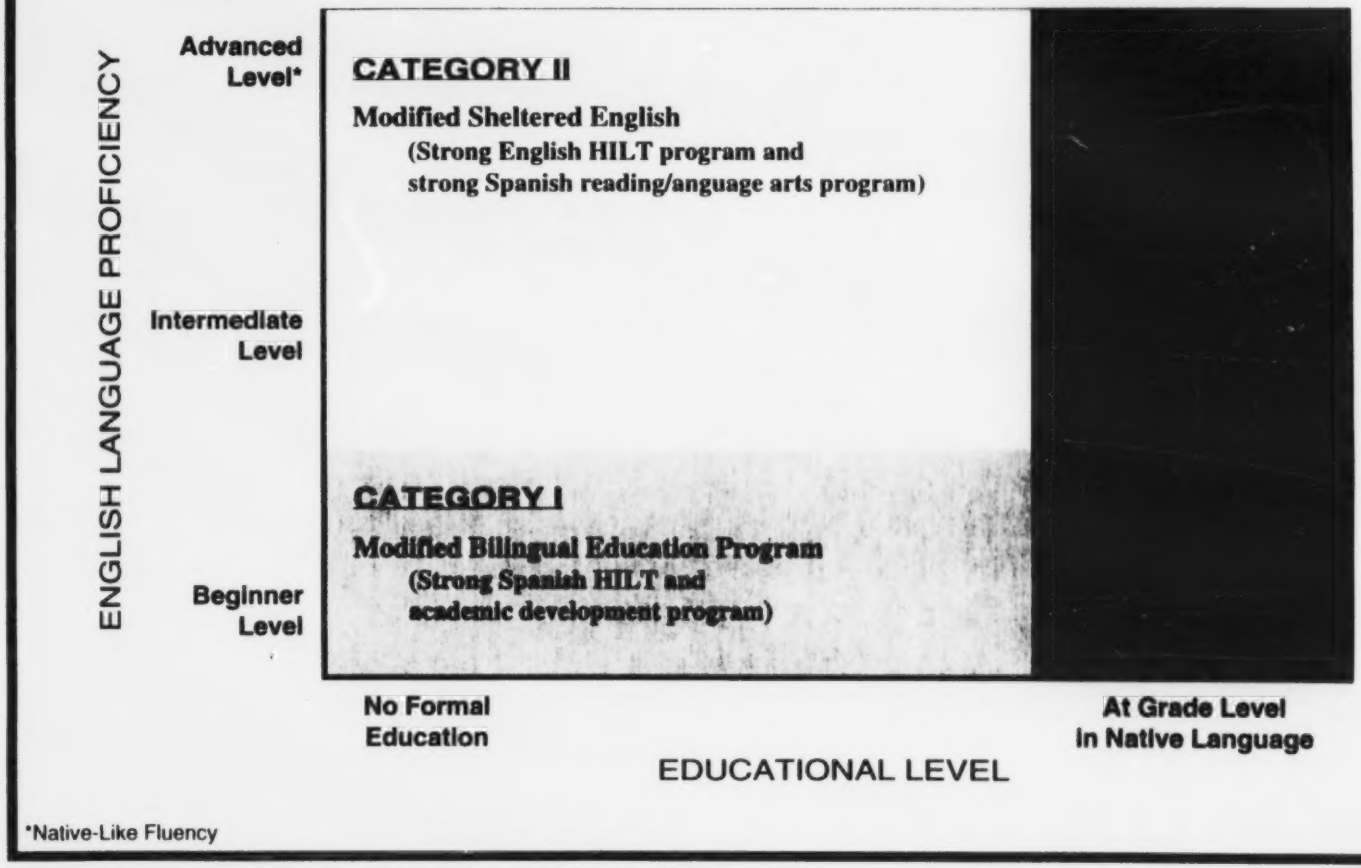
Figure IV

GRADES 7 - 12



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Organizational Structures

Schools that have effectively addressed the needs of the recent immigrant organize their programs in different ways. They do not adhere to the traditional system of assigning students to grades according to chronological age without regard to academic experience and students' exposure and proficiency in the English language. Furthermore, they do not view grade retention as the answer to newcomer students' language and concept development needs. Below are descriptions of the most commonly used organizational structures:

School Within a School (Full Day or Half Day) is a widely used concept with very encouraging results. Students eligible for these special services number at least fifteen or the equivalent student/teacher ratio in the regular classes. Students are assigned the same classes and a group of teachers is responsible for planning and monitoring student progress. Students are allowed to spend at least two classes with all other students. These classes are usually physical education and art classes. These classes are conducted in the regular campuses where students of that age and grade level attend.

Modified Bilingual/ESL Programs occurs as part of the regular bilingual education or ESL class, but adjustments are made to all components based on the student's age and academic maturational level. In some cases, the bilingual/ESL classes are accelerated and students exited at a much faster pace.

Center Approach (Full Day or Half Day) is used by school districts that have centralized resources in a specific location to address the needs of the newcomer students. Students get language and content area instruction in this center for specified periods of time or until students reach a certain proficiency level in the native or English languages. Staff are specially trained and selected to work in the center. A number of support services are provided at these centers.

Self-Contained Programs are used when the numbers are small and qualified bilingual/ESL teachers are teaching the regular classes. These teachers will pace and individualize instruction for the newcomer.

Resource Programs are used to support existing instructional programs and provide assistance in specific curriculum areas. These programs need to be closely supervised, a planning period allowed for regular and resource teachers to mediate instruction.

Support Services

Students adjusting to the mores of this society and educational system face formidable challenges in order to succeed. In addition to the classroom instruction, other support services will facilitate their adjustment to the new environment and will support the students' efforts to succeed in this country. The range of support services that have been successfully used in schools with newcomer programs includes:

Parental Involvement Programs integrate parents into what perhaps may be a new role, that of decision-maker in instructional decisions. Effective schools encourage parental participation by implementing innovative parent outreach programs and by ensuring that the parents are provided the necessary resources to understand what is happening at meetings and parent conferences.

Specialized Counseling Services are provided to the newcomer. Counselors receive training to understand and work with students whose cultural and linguistic orientations are different. Counseling services are available during different parts of the days when they are most convenient for the newcomer. These services are available not only to the student but for the family as a whole.

Extracurricular Activities are planned to integrate the newcomer student into the overall school

environment. Support groups, mentoring programs, peer-coaching, and campus exchange programs are established and new comer students encouraged to participate.

Community Services are facilitated through the school. Information is provided to students and parents of the services available in the community. Some schools sponsor fairs where community service agencies come to the school to talk to students and parents.

Career Education is important especially at the secondary levels. Career options are discussed and instructional programs geared to address students' career goals. Career counseling is an important part of the program.

Exiting Criteria

Immigrant students' programs are planned to phase in the full integration of the recent immigrant to the school as soon as possible. Although this integration process begins since the first day the newcomer attends school, most programs' goals provide for full integration into the regular instructional program. The exiting criteria should be based on three conditions: (1) students' proficiency in the English language has reached the advanced level or approaching native like proficiency; (2) students have shown successful participation in the regular classroom; and (3) students have successfully adjusted to the new environment. The Language Proficiency Committee (LPAC) will make the final decision on the exiting of a student.

Transitioning Support

After exiting from the program newcomer students should be monitored at the end of each semester for two years to ensure that success in the regular classroom is sustained and students are not falling behind. A report should be made to the LPAC at the end of each semester on the status of students who have made the transition out of the special services program. The LPAC will have the authority to require additional support services or to place student in a special program until a successful transition can occur.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A critical facet of any program, including one targeting recent immigrants is a process for monitoring service delivery and evaluation the short and long term effects of the various educational services provided. The evaluation component of the plan should be designed in a manner which analyzes not only performance outcomes (e.g., test scores, promotion and graduation rates, participation in extra-curricular activities, etc.) but also examines the extent of participation/access to appropriate educational services. Program accountability would thus include monitoring and assessment of the nature and extent of services provided for immigrant students. Feedback mechanisms should also be integrated into the evaluation system to provide information to school test not staff which might be used for program revision or refinement.

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SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' PERSPECTIVES

In keeping with contract specifications, IDRA convened a focus group of border area superintendents in order to obtain their perspectives on: (1) the methodology for counting recent immigrants being considered by IDRA, and (2) their perspectives on recent immigrant student issues. The superintendents of the five border school districts were invited to participate in this focus group meeting. Participants included: Mr. James Lehmann, Superintendent of Weslaco ISD; Dr. Esperanza Zendejas, Superintendent of Brownsville ISD; Mr. Ruben Saenz, Superintendent of Rio Grande City CISD; and Mr. Lupe Puente, Director of Federal Programs of Laredo United ISD.

Dr. María Robledo Montecel, Executive Director of IDRA, began the meeting with comments on the importance of meeting the needs of the immigrant students and the ever present negative connotations of being an immigrant.

She advised the group of IDRA's intent to obtain their input on two areas:

- How the immigrant students are counted and what numbers the districts are reporting; and
- The educational responses that will be needed to meet immigrant student needs our schools.

Josie D. Supik, Director of IDRA's Division of Research and Evaluation, introduced the first area of discussion, districts' current methods of counting recent immigrant students. She clarified IDRA's role with the TEA funded NAFTA impact study:

- Find out how many immigrant students would be coming to Texas because of NAFTA, and
- Look at how districts are identifying, counting, and reporting immigrant students and develop a better method that would more accurately count immigrant students.

Roy Lee Johnson, Coordinator of IDRA's Division of Research and Evaluation, presented information on the number of immigrant students projected to come to Texas as the result of NAFTA. IDRA staff presented findings from studies on the effects of NAFTA including the Southwest Voter Registration Project (SWVRP) study which predicts 50,000 to 100,000 immigrants coming to the U.S. because of the agricultural demand. Staff also reported on other studies conducted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) records which predict an increase of 17% to 19% due to immigration in the area of agrarian population.

One superintendent suggested that the source of information providing such high numbers concerning agrarian immigrants be challenged (State Comptroller's office). According to this superintendent, these numbers seem too high for the valley area. He suggested that the numbers be verified with the numbers from the Department of Agriculture.

One superintendent also stated that the trend of immigrants that he has seen in the valley area is still the traditional trek; male, older adolescents with the rest of the family eventually meeting up with them.

Each representative from the four schools commented on their annual growth rate:

Weslaco ISD:	3.5%	or 500 students a year
Rio Grande City CISD:	3.6%	or 472 students a year
Brownsville ISD:	3.8%	or 1000 students a year
Laredo United ISD:	12%	or 1500 students a year

Although this growth is or will be seen along the border, it is believed that this population will only stay along the border for a short period and will move on to other parts of the state or to the northern states.

After reviewing the federal guidelines and districts' counting procedures, a series of focus group questions were asked of the participating school district representatives. Areas of inquiry included: (1) identification of recent immigrant students; and (2) immigrant student counting procedures. Participants' responses are summarized below:

Identification

Federal guidelines are not clear enough for school districts to accurately identify student immigrants.

One superintendent noted that U.S.-born children of undocumented workers pose a problem for the district. These students are not classified as immigrants because of their U.S. citizenship but qualify in every other aspect. The other school representatives agreed that a further clarification from the Immigration Department is necessary for this atypical group.

A key factor to the figure used in estimating the growth of the population should also take into account the area's current population (Census data). There is a considerable undercount of school-aged children. There was concern that the census figures are still under representing the Hispanic count in the U.S.

Participants reported that parents do not use "the system" because they feel threatened for their children in many respects. Examples were given of immigrants who came through the U.S. with the amnesty law recently, are therefore legal but are still frightened by the system. Getting parents to use the system is very important in order to get accurate figures in counting students.

There is a high mobility among recent immigrants. Parents move from one address to another because the monetary requirements cannot be met at that address. Whatever counting methodology is utilized should be sensitive to this mobility factor.

There is a need for the state to restructure the whole process of identifying immigrant students to facilitate a clearer interpretation of what can and cannot be done or how it should be done. A cover letter should be written identifying the most important points and all litigation concerns.

A concern arose over the identification of immigrant and migrant students. Schools along the border have come across situations where immigrant students will migrate after a year or two. The school district representatives commented that a clarification needs to be made to facilitate identifying these students as immigrant, migrant, or both.

Counting Methodology

How school districts count immigrant students, even with federal guidelines, varies from district to district. Counting immigrant students for three years only fulfills the federal requirements but not the immigrant student's needs.

Laredo United ISD (UISD) has a concern with using only "immigrant status" and "school last attended" as a method of counting. They are currently using this system and have found that parents do not provide the required or exact information which causes the number of immigrants counted to be incorrect. The word "immigrant" seems to be a deterrent for parents to provide true and accurate information. Laredo UISD suggests using non-threatening words with parents.

The legal aspect of counting immigrants is a major concern. This has been a factor which has impacted the Weslaco ISD ability to count immigrant students.

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The three year period of counting immigrant students is not long enough because the students may not be prepared to enter the regular school system.

Rio Grande City CISD uses a Student Services person to register all new students. Students must first clear this office before being admitted to any school within the district. This insures that every student is processed through the same system. Immigrant counts tend to be more accurate.

Rio Grande City CISD's Identifying Procedures include:

- Home Language Survey;
- Last school attended including the grade; and
- Staff who have been provided special training in communications and identifying procedures.

One participant noted that if schools are left to choose their own method of identifying their immigrant students, then immigrant students will never be counted accurately.

One reason for this is that the state does not have a required method of identifying immigrant students. The only identifier used by districts is the definition provided by the federal government. In reality, individual school districts apply their own method of identifying immigrant students.

It was noted that if state agencies increase the distribution of funds for recent immigrants then districts will increase the accuracy of their counts of immigrant students.

Educational Responses

Participants were asked to respond to a series of focus group questions on educational responses to recent immigrant student needs. Areas of inquiry included: (1) support services (including health care, school orientation, and social support services); (2) educational placement procedures; and (3) effective program features and transitional support. Participants' responses to each of the focus group questions are summarized below.

Support Services

Superintendents were asked to share their perspectives on a number of immigrant student characteristics, including:

- health related needs;
- school orientation and support services;
- educational placement procedures; and
- transitional support.

Health Related Needs

School districts need to be sensitive to the health care needs of immigrant students (such as immunization) and aware of the immigrant's inaccessibility to adequate health care.

Participants regarded the issue of health care as being a very important factor to consider when speaking about the educational concerns for immigrant students. They considered health care access to be influenced by socio-economics. This past year, BISD began a high school health clinic where students could receive advice, information and counseling at any scheduled time. BISD found that most of the information was requested by the eldest sibling attending school and

pertained to family health situations. Acceptance of health related information (such as immunization records) from various non-U.S. sources was an issue of discussion with participants.

School Orientation and Social Support Services

In summary, recent immigrant students need to be placed within a supportive environment which includes a low student-teacher ratio, bilingual education programs, and a multicultural education to help them adjust to a new environment.

Prevalent among all border schools is the issue of an immigrant student coming into the U.S. without any previous formal education. Those students who come in with a reading level in their primary language will transition more easily into the English language.

Literature on immigrant students reflects a conflict between the language used at home and the language used at the school. Schools must be sensitive to that issue. Participants recognized a tendency for schools to automatically place immigrant students in low academic tracks on the basis of language differences or slow academic progress due to such differences.

Participants were also concerned with the disproportionate assignment of students to an inappropriate environment such as special education.

Many immigrant students are placed in special education classes automatically. During the three years when they are counted as immigrants, Rio Grande City CISD pays careful attention to when the immigrant students are in class and when they are tested.

Assumptions can be found in some of the literature and in practice which state that a student with limited English proficiency cannot be gifted and talented. Participants noted a need to challenge these assumptions.

Participants also found a need to provide an orientation for immigrant students on the school environment. Issues such as school rules and standardized procedures would be covered.

According to participants, gang related incidents are a problem because the recent immigrants, like other students, tend to be recruited by existing gangs.

Educational Placement Procedures

Assumptions about school placements should not be made of immigrant students; their attributes and needs should be assessed irrespective of their language, ethnicity and socio-economic status.

Beyond the identification procedures already used, others that would be needed are included: (1) an improved Home Language Survey asking for additional information on previous schooling and grade level; (2) a requirement that all school districts obtain this information; and (3) assignment of a single organization to conduct assessments of recent immigrant children and provide in-service training to their parents on what these children will face in U.S. public schools.

Although the "newcomers school" specially designated to receive immigrant students that is currently functioning in McAllen ISD is a good model, such programs may not be appropriate for all immigrant students entering Texas public schools.

A language assessment and aptitude test appropriate for use with immigrant students is necessary to identify their needs and to prepare students for the realities of schools in the U.S.

Parents should receive information on the schools and the programs they offer to help their children receive an adequate education. The parents should also be given opportunities to provide input concerning their child's grade level placement.

The school districts should have an array of assessment strategies because some immigrant children come from rural areas but have a very high aptitude. These students, because they are immigrants, will often be placed with children who have never attended schools. Due to cultural norms, immigrant children and their parents may not object to such inappropriate placements.

Effective Program Features

Extended learning opportunities, a supportive school and home environment, oral language development and writing activities should be provided to the immigrant student.

According to superintendents, recent immigrants should be provided extended learning opportunities.

Supportive environments, established through training and including support systems within the school district (special programs and facilities), and community awareness are needed.

For pre-K through kindergarten, oral language development is important; however, hands-on activities are also important for development of these and other skills.

For first through fourth grades, oral language development and more writing activities should be continued.

Inductive type of activities should be used; higher order thinking, problem solving is as important as the continuance of oral language development.

Technology should also be considered as a component for an effective program.

Transitional Support

Participants concurred on the need for some transitional period that allows for monitoring recent immigrant students' transition to the regular classroom.

Among their observations regarding transitions were the following:

Three years in bilingual education classes is not enough. Students should be allowed to participate as long as specialized instruction is needed.

Continued monitoring each semester for two years should be a part of follow-up requirements.

Additional support in regular class may be needed during the initial one or two years after exiting from the special programs. If necessary, re-entry to a specialized program should be worked into the monitoring process.

Advocates for students are needed so that if they are placed in schools they will not be left alone to "fend for themselves."

A model school to consider is McAllen ISD which has a school within a school. Students receive all content area information but stay within a specialized instructional setting.

One south Texas school district is attempting to replicate what McAllen ISD has implemented. The ESL block consists of two periods, half a day with language development and the other half is ESL in the content areas. The district is also implementing a six week summer program strictly for immigrant students.

Weslaco ISD has targeted computer technology through bilingual education to improve the educational effort. In a five year plan the school district will spend a million dollars a year in computer training and equipment for all the campuses in the district.

Another school system had a similar program in the summer for juniors and seniors. This was a successful program because approximately 75-80% of the students passed the TAAS tests.

The data obtained from the focus group sessions served to verify and reinforce findings obtained from IDRA's review of the research literature and that obtained from its own analyses. Texas school administrators, most of whom have a long history of dealing with the needs of immigrant students, are in a unique position to advise other school personnel who may be having to deal with recent immigrant pupils for the first time.

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Appendix A

INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
Procedure for Developing Level 2 Estimates of the Impact of the
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)
Records Review for New Enrollees

District _____

Student ID # _____ Gender: [0] Female [1] Male

Ethnicity: [1] Hispanic [2] White (Non-Hispanic) [3] African American [4] Asian American [5] Native American [6] Other (Specify) _____

Date of Birth _____ Birthplace _____
Month Day Year City State Country

		1989-1990			1990-1991			1991-1992			1992-1993		
1	School student last attended?	School Name	City	State	School Name	City	State	School Name	City	State	School Name	City	State
2	Student in following programs?	1989-1990			1990-1991			1991-1992			1992-1993		
	(a) Bilingual/ESL	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(b) Special Education	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(c) Vocational	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(d) State Compensatory	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(e) Chapter 1	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(f) Migrant	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(g) Gifted & Talented	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(j) Newcomer	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(l) At-risk	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
	(j) Other (Specify)	_____			_____			_____			_____		
		_____			_____			_____			_____		
3	Student's grade level?	_____			_____			_____			_____		
4	Identified as Immigrant?	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown
5	Received Immigrant Aid?	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown	[1] Yes	[0] No	[8] Unknown

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Intercultural Development Research Association
Procedure for Developing Estimates of the Impact of the
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

ON-SITE VALIDATION PROCEDURES

- Introductions
- Purpose of the visit
    - Part of the TEA contract to validate data submitted. TEA is interested in assessing the impact of NAFTA on education as it pertains to new immigrant enrollees and an education plan for this population.
    - Solicit more detailed information on methods and procedures used to identify, count and report new immigrant enrollees.
    - Personally thank district personnel who compiled the information.
- Review status of information collected and submitted to IDRA (Form 1 and Form 2).
- Conduct brief interview (use form provided and add any additional questions as feasible).
- Review and validate information previously submitted on Form 1 and Form 2 **OR** Collect and validate information from Form 1 and Form 2. Options for reviewing the information include (one or as many as are feasible):
    - Review printed information.
    - Review a sample of cases on computer screen.
    - Review sample of student permanent record folders.
- Record all pertinent observations.
- Exit comments.

INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
Procedure for Developing Estimates of the Impact of the
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

Interviewer:_____ Date:_____ From:____ To:___

District:_____

Interviewee:_____ Position:_____

1. What methods and procedures does your district use to identify, count and report new student enrollees?

A. Are these methods and procedures used for both immigrant and non-immigrant new enrollees? Why? Why not?

B. How long have you used these methods?

C. Approximately, how many new enrollees have entered the district's schools over the past few school years (89-90 through 92-93)?

D. From which locations do most new enrollees originate?

2. What types of directives has your district received from state and federal agencies on the identification, counting and reporting of new immigrant enrollees?

3. What types of directives has your district established for the identification, counting and reporting of new immigrant enrollees?

4. What types of training (pre-service and in-service) have staff received on the identification, counting and reporting of new immigrant students? PROBE: Who received the training? Who provided the training? How effective was the training?

5. Are there checks to determine the accuracy of new immigrant enrollee information? PROBE: What are these checks? How accurate are the counts of new immigrant enrollees over the past few years?

Focus Questions

Identification

1. What are the key issues and concerns in the identification of recent immigrant students?

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

Counting Methodology

2. Do you think this counting methodology will more accurately count student immigrants?

Placement Criteria and Assessment Procedures

3. What assessment procedures beyond what is already in place would have to be used?

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

4. What kind of training is needed for implementing or modifying assessment procedures? And for whom?

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

Effective Program Features

5. What are the features of an effective program? (Pre-k-3, 4-6, 7-12)

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

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6. For a district that has historically had a flow of recent immigrants, what are the facilitating and impending factors which affect the implementation of an effective program?

Instructional Options

7. What are the characteristics of staff who implement effective programs?

How much retooling would have to happen?

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

Organizational Structures

8. What organizational structures are you currently using and which ones do you feel would be more effective? (Pre-k, 4-6, 7-12)

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

Support Services

9. What support services does you district currently provide that have been effective?

What should an effective support services program for recent immigrants include?

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

Exiting Criteria

10. When are students ready to exit into the regular program?

Transition Support

11. What are the barriers to appropriate support in transition from special programs to the regular program?

How can this process be monitored and assessed for efficacy?

Strategies Which Form Success Among Non-traditional Students

Research conducted by IDRA on successful schooling for economically disadvantaged youth was summarized by the Texas Education Agency in a publication focusing on responding to the needs of potential dropouts. Though not all recent immigrants come from low income families, many of the recommended strategies for successful schooling are directly applicable to recent immigrants enrolled in Texas' public schools. The following quotes, and paraphrases summarize some of the key concepts incorporated in the publication and is provided as a tool for guiding local school district responses to the immigrant student population at the local district level.

High Expectations and Success in Schooling

Class, race, ethnicity and gender are demographic factors that may influence judgment and behavior at all levels of the educational system.

A major correlate of schools effectively serving the economically disadvantaged, is a principal who promotes academic emphasis, creates organizational structures to support that emphasis, and behaviorally demonstrates the belief that all students will master academic content. Ways of promoting positive expectations include:

- Modeling positive expectations for teachers and students;
- Encouragement and support success as the norm;
- Remediation programs are based on students' strength, potential and possibilities; and
- Peer praise and mutual validation by staff are encouraged.

Encouragement

Successful schools use encouragement and support independence, self-esteem, risk-taking, and acceptance of others. Examples of such strategies include:

- Identifying and verbalizing the strengths of each student;
- Encouraging students regularly and systematically;
- Acknowledging efforts toward specified goals;
- Commenting on/expand on correct aspects of incorrect responses;
- Pointing out students competence and value of accomplishment;
- Using of oral, written, and tangible rewards for a broad spectrum of activities;
- Encouraging students to accomplish mastery out of personal enjoyment and the desire to acquire new skills; and
- Commenting favorably on students outside interests, hobbies, and behaviors that compliment classroom instruction.

Monitoring Teaching

Schools that work monitor teaching to identify and change negative expectations and behaviors. Teachers expectations can become self-fulfilling prophesies. Teachers should observe their own behavior and replace negative expectations with those demonstrating positive attitudes. Ways to monitor discrepancies in the treatment of students include:

- Variance in the amount and style of interactions;
- Amount of wait-time for responses;
- Student seating patterns;
- Amounts of time spent praising or criticizing;
- Supportive versus discriminating behavior; and
- Amount of work and effort required of students.

Teaching Styles

Effective schools encourage the use of a wide variety of teaching styles. Students have a variety of preferred ways of learning, and there are many approaches to teaching. The key elements of learning style include: environmental elements, emotional elements, sociological elements, and physical elements. Teaching styles may include any combination or all of the following:

- Inductive;
- Inductive training;
- Developmental;
- Group;
- Social;
- Non-directive;
- Synthetics; and
- Conceptual.

Appropriate Expectations

Competent schools maintain high expectations which are appropriate to each students' ability level, and monitor students' progress in order to maintain appropriate expectations. Examples include:

- Setting goals on a weekly or bi-weekly basis;
- Provide a variety of learning activities so that all students may succeed often;
- Include all skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in language development, on daily basis;

- Measure improvement using both holistic and discrete criteria;
- Base expectations on student ability, on their broader real life experiences; and
- Identify and adapt instruction to critical thinking experiences students may have at home or out of school.

Organizational Operations

Successful schools use structure organizational operations to facilitate the success of all students. Such schools:

- Place greater emphasis on the accomplishment of reading and mathematics objectives;
- Share the belief that all students can master all objectives;
- Have high levels of expectation for student learning; and
- Promote and encourage parent initiated involvement.

Leadership

Effective schools exhibit strong leadership that assumes and supports success. School improvement results from focused direction and support by those in leadership positions. Strategies identified as supportive of success include:

- Providing extensive and consistent support including training and technical assistance;
- Recognizing that innovative programming requires time;
- Supporting time and space for teachers to teach, co-plan, and solve problems with peers; and
- Guarantee that at there is at least one adult on campus that knows, respects, defends, mediates and monitors the students' total well-being.

Collaboration

Innovative schools encourage collaboration at the campus level to establish local educational goals, objectives, and activities.

Participatory Staff Development

Innovative schools plan for staff development and institute cooperative decision-making. Staff development should be directly related to student and teacher needs, to the curriculum, and to the instructional program. Key elements in effective staff development programs include:

- Teacher involvement in assessing campus needs;
- Teacher involvement in planning and conducting the staff development program;
- Provide a series of activities that are both specific and fit into a comprehensive plan; and

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- Require a variety of means for training application and monitoring.

Correlate Curriculum to Student Needs

Successful programs correlate campus programmatic activities designed to meet the needs of students...

Examples include:

- Teaching English language arts through combinations which reduce language to its smallest parts like letters, words and phrases, then using larger contexts such as complete stories or compositions;
- Using leaning centers set up for individual or small group reinforcement; and
- Using student initiated projects, team efforts and student presentations.

Instructional Pacing

Productive schools pace instruction to allow for effective learning for all students. A recommended sequence includes the following:

- Begin lessons by reviewing what is to be learned;
- Review previous learning;
- Present new material in small steps with student practice after each step;
- Give clear detailed instructions; and
- Provide for active practice.

Ongoing Evaluation

Operative schools conduct ongoing evaluation and use the information to modify teaching strategies and organizational operations. New practices need time to be effective, but evaluation should be frequent enough to discontinue practice that is not working.

Meaningful Community Involvement

Successful schools foster community involvement and create campuses that are centers of community involvement support and interaction. Examples of effective strategies include:

- Scheduling campus activities after school, on evenings, and on weekends;
- Providing space for existing adult and community education, offering and encouraging community participation;
- Providing space for community youth groups;
- Organizing tutoring/mentoring activities during the same hours as adult programs;

- Providing child care through existing agencies to facilitate parents use of campus community centers; and

- Encouraging parent-teacher conference during after-school hours.

Meaningful Parental Involvement

Effective schools research indicates that when schools lower barriers to involve all parents they readily form partnerships in support of the educational success of their children. Parents are more likely to support their children's educational needs if:

- They have access to the school system;

- Become involved with the school in meaningful ways;

- Make significant contributions and their leadership within the school is encouraged; and and

- Are valued by the system as the student's first and most important teacher.

Other Strategies

Other strategies referenced in the effective schools literature and relevant to meeting the needs of recent immigrant students include:

- Provide effective and appropriate Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs for students whose primary language is not English;

- Use Cooperative Learning as a method of instruction;

- Create schools in which students develop and maintain a sense of belonging;

- Emphasize extra and co-curricular activities that help build academic, social and physical skills;

- Increase recognition of students' accomplishments or special talents in both academic and non-academic pursuits;

- Provide opportunities in which students can be acknowledged as peer leaders and more fully participate in projects that respond to both students and community needs;

- Develop a variety of community service roles for students and encourage them to volunteer;

- Provide a broad range of services to meet the socio-emotional, health and nutritional needs of students; and

- Develop sensitivity toward and effective strategies for responding to economically related needs of students, including work-study programs that help balance academic needs with economic imperatives faced by many students.

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Albert Cortez, Ph.D.

An IDRA staff member since 1975, Dr. Albert Cortez is currently the Director of IDRA's Institute for Policy and Leadership. In this position, he oversees IDRA staff working to provide information on policy issues, training on effective integration of research and advocacy, and technical assistance in identifying policy issues and developing impact strategies. Dr. Cortez also directs the federally-funded Evaluation Assistance Center - East in coordination with The University of Washington in Washington, DC, and spearheads IDRA's national, state, and local reform efforts impacting the education of minority, low income, limited-English-proficient, and recent immigrant populations.

Throughout his tenure at IDRA, Dr. Cortez has been deeply involved in Texas school finance and policy issues. From 1977 through the 1993 legislative sessions, he has served as a Technical Advisor and resource person on education-related issues to the Texas Mexican American Legislative Caucus and the Senate Hispanic Caucus.

Dr. Cortez has authored and co-authored numerous publications including *Regional Education Service Centers: A Review* and *Texas School Dropout Study: 1987-89*. He has also contributed over forty articles to the *IDRA Newsletter* and the regional press.

Dr. Cortez received his bachelor's degree in Sociology with a concentration in Bilingual Education from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio and his master's in Cultural Foundations of Education from The University of Texas at Austin. He earned his doctorate in Cultural Foundations of Education with a support area in Educational Administration from The University of Texas at Austin.

Josie D. Supik, M.S.

Josie Danini Supik is the Director of IDRA's Division of Research and Evaluation. As such, she designs, directs and monitors IDRA's many contract research and evaluation projects, runs the IDRA Center for the Prevention and Recovery of Dropouts, and oversees the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, IDRA's award-winning cross-age tutoring program for at-risk youth which was recently accepted by the National Diffusion Network for replication in schools across the United States.

Ms. Supik's research experience comes from her background as a medical anthropologist After receiving from her undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame, she earned her master's degree in Medical Anthropology from Case Western University and completed an internship centered on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Ms. Supik has authored and co-authored many publications including IDRA's recent release *Hispanic Families as Valued Partners: An Educators Guide* and has contributed numerous articles in the *IDRA Newsletter* and other professional journals.

In addition to her duties at IDRA, Ms. Supik currently serves an Assistant Adjunct Professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, where she acts as a consultant and lecturer on cross-cultural medical ethics.

Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D.

A part of IDRA since 1975, Dr. Abelardo Villarreal is currently the Director of IDRA's Division of Training. This Division includes a number of important projects including: the Multifunctional Resource Center (MRC) - Service Area Nine, a federally-funded center providing training and technical assistance to Title VII bilingual and alternative education programs; Project *Adelante*, a program of support and training for early childhood educators; and the Family English Literacy Program, an adult literacy program for parents of limited-English-proficient students.

As Division Director, Dr. Villarreal oversees IDRA's contract training and technical assistance activities. Through continued contact with school districts and state education agencies, Dr. Villarreal works to determine schools' needs for focused assistance and to identify trends in education across the nation. A major responsibility is to design and oversee the delivery of innovative, comprehensive training and technical assistance packages in support of extensive school improvement efforts.

Throughout his tenure at IDRA, Dr. Villarreal has developed proposals and acquired funding for numerous educational programs that have served hundreds of LEP, bilingual and at-risk students, their teachers and parents. He has authored and co-authored over twenty publications in Spanish and English and has presented at many conferences and professional seminars.

Dr. Villarreal received his bachelor's in Political Science and Business Administration and his master's in Education and Spanish from Texas A & M University, Kingsville. He then earned a second master's in Educational Administration from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas. He received his doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from The University of Texas at Austin.